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**THE ANATOMY OF TRUTH**

By the same Author

## THE CONFLICT OF TRUTH

LETTER FROM DR. GEORGE MATHESON, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.E.

19 ST. BERNARD'S CRESCENT,  
EDINBURGH,  
*December 10, 1902.*

MY DEAR SIR,

About a fortnight ago my attention was directed to your book. I bought the book, and began to study it. I opened it with great prejudice. I felt sure it would be another of the commonplace efforts after the restoration of orthodoxy, whose frequency is only equalled by their abortiveness.

As I read, I passed through a series of transformations. I was first arrested by the beauty of the style, and then by the bold claim to absolute originality. By-and-by I was more than arrested—I was bound hand and foot. I felt I was in the grip of a master who would by no means let me go till I had paid the uttermost farthing. I have as yet only read two hundred and thirty pages; but I am simply enthralled, enchained, spellbound, by the magnificence of the reasoning and the striking freshness of the treatment.

I have never in the field of Apologetics seen anything like it. The nearest approach to it is Butler's Analogy; but Butler is content with proving that Nature has equal difficulties with Revelation; that does not content you.

You have succeeded in establishing, not equal difficulties, but equal agreements, and to an extent that to me is simply marvellous.

With deep respect,  
I remain,

Yours very sincerely,

GEORGE MATHESON.  
(Formerly Minister of St. Bernard's, Edinburgh.)

*(For Opinions of the Press, see end of Volume.)*

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# THE ANATOMY OF TRUTH

BY  
F. HUGH CAPRON

B.A., F.R.A.S., F.L.S., F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF  
'THE CONFLICT OF TRUTH'

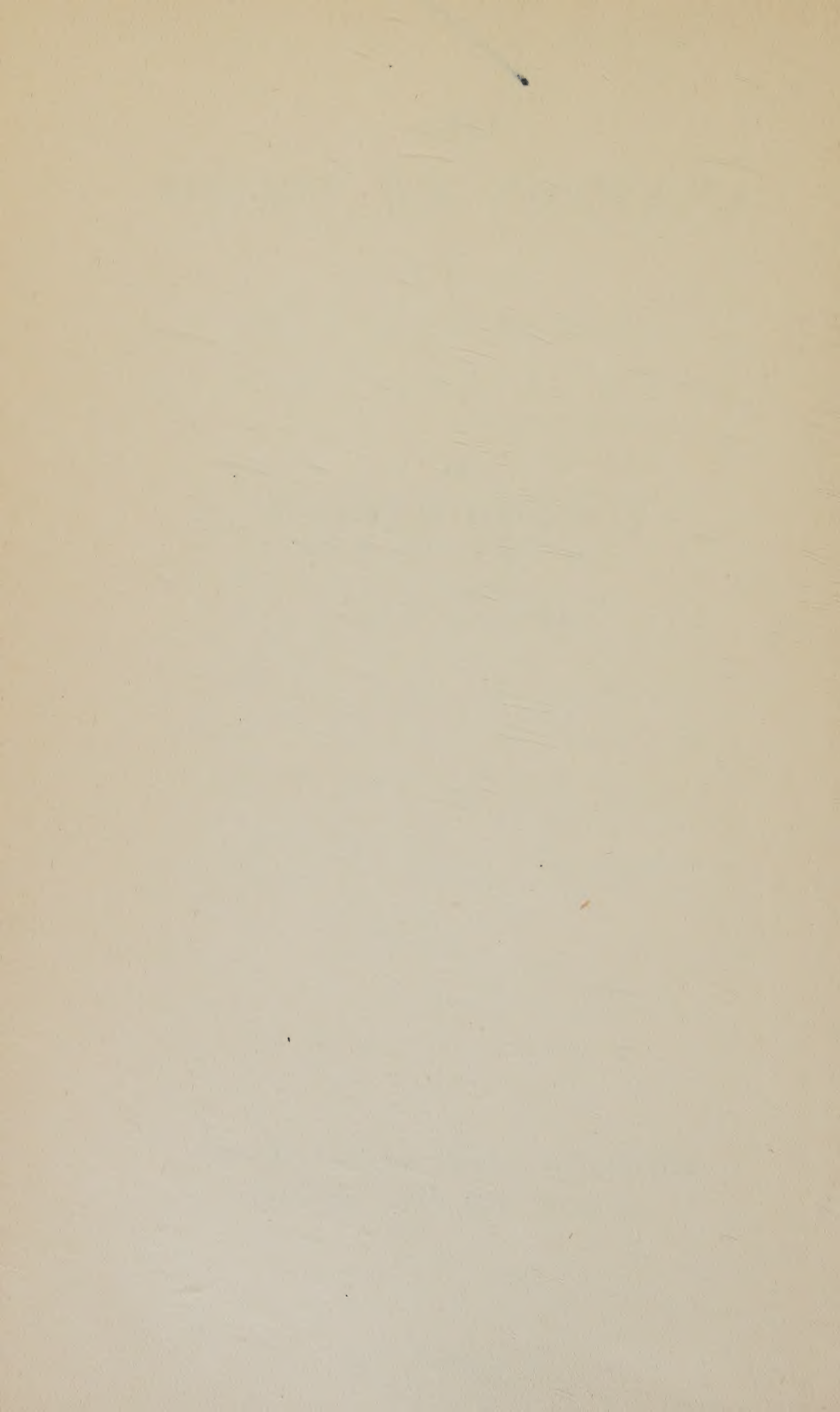
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To

E. A. C.





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## CHAPTER I

### RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

THE present volume is intended as a companion to my earlier work, *The Conflict of Truth*, in which I endeavoured to show that the Religion of the Bible, both as regards its professedly scientific utterances, and also as regards its own peculiar doctrines relative to Spiritual Life, rests upon the surest foundations known to Science, and is therefore, from the highest intellectual point of view, worthy of all acceptance. The favourable reception accorded to *The Conflict of Truth* sufficiently indicates that the argument which it unfolds has arrested the attention of a considerable section of the community, and seems to justify a further attempt on my part to lay before the public the views which appear to me to be irresistible as to the true status of Religion, and the place which Religion occupies in the anatomy of Truth.

The object with which the present volume was undertaken differs from that which I had in view when I wrote *The Conflict of Truth*. Since that work was published a change has passed over the surface of public opinion upon the subject of Religion. In 1902 the declared warfare between Science and Religion was still at its height. Scientists seemed to be infected with the delusion that the vast accessions of knowledge which the nineteenth century had accumulated



had undermined the claims of the Bible upon our acceptance; and the danger which then threatened Religion—if, indeed, an integral part of the Universe can ever be said to be in danger at all—was of a purely intellectual character. To show that Religion has nothing to fear from Science; to demonstrate that the two, so far from being antagonists, are really interdependent associates and allies; to prove that the fibres of Religion and Science are so inextricably intertwined together that the overthrow of the one must necessarily involve the downfall of the other; these were the objects which I had in view when I wrote *The Conflict of Truth*.

The danger with which Religion is threatened to-day is of a different kind from that which found its expression in the intellectual menaces with which she was assailed in 1902. It is now tacitly admitted on all sides that Science, having done her worst, has failed to disturb the sublime equanimity of her supposed antagonist but real ally. It is not that Science has failed to establish the truths upon which her nineteenth-century attacks upon Religion were based. On the contrary, most of the scientific discoveries which furnished the materials for the hostile criticisms of Huxley and of Haeckel rest at the present time on a basis of even greater certainty than that which attached to them in those troublous days when they were first thrown, like nihilistic bombs, into the startled camp of Theology. No one to-day seriously questions, except in so far as Science herself has modified or corrected them, the truth of any of those scientific discoveries which thirty, and twenty, and even ten years ago, seemed to carry theological annihilation before them. And yet no one, with whose

opinion we need concern ourselves, seriously believes to-day that Religion stands in any danger from either the researches of Science or the musings of Philosophy.

The truth is that the great nineteenth-century struggle between Religion and Science has terminated in the strangest reversal that has ever been recorded in the annals of controversy. As the first paroxysms of panic commenced to subside, and theologians began to look around them with more of confidence and less of dread, a suspicion gradually dawned upon mankind that the apparently lethal weapons of Science were not so deadly as had been at first supposed. Little by little men began to perceive that the hostilities of Science are to Religion simply a blessing in disguise—that while they carry with them a destructive energy which is apparent only, they are possessed of a constructive force which is both permanent and real; until at length Theology has learnt to bid welcome to every novel scientific discovery, in the confident expectation that it will furnish fresh materials out of which to construct new and lasting supports to the permanent fabric of Religion.

And thus, at the opening of this twentieth century, we are witnessing an episode which to the controversialists of the middle and later years of the nineteenth century would have seemed strange indeed. We behold the unique spectacle of Religion, the invaded, bidding welcome, with open arms, to Science, the invader,—hailing her great and dreaded rival as a deliverer rather than a foe. We watch Religion insidiously converting to her own uses the engines which were designed for her destruction. And thus—strangest spectacle of all!—we see the very weapons of Religion being forged in the arsenals of Science.

To-day both the nature of the opposition and the scene of the conflict are changed. The subtle assailant which, with a false and feigned humility, misnamed itself Agnosticism, which cloaked its pretended ignorance of things with the mantle of a mock philosophy, and which, like a modernised Retiarius, armed itself for the fray with the entangling meshes of a pseudologic, has disappeared from the arena, and a new and strangely different champion has arisen to dispute on a different field the unvanquished claims of Religion. The enemy of Religion to-day is not the suave and plausible scientist, nor the subtle and plastic philosopher, but the socialistic atheist. A socialistic atheism stalks through the land, unforbidden and un-reproved. A socialistic atheism walks our streets and lectures in our Sunday-schools. Side by side, Sunday after Sunday, two different catechisms are being taught to the youth of our land. In one building is a Christian teacher propounding to our children the way which they should go—'And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.'<sup>1</sup> And on the other side of the street, in a neighbouring building, a professor of another school is busily engaged in promulgating another gospel and another creed; recommending to his youthful scholars another way—'This is the way, walk ye in it.'

But unfortunately the way which this philosopher so strenuously commends to his credulous proselytes is just the path which they ought not to tread. It is a way of wrath and bitterness; a way of strife and

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxxv. 8.



envying; a way of irrational and stupefying unbelief. This is the force with which at the present moment Religion is called upon to grapple, a thoughtless and unreasoned atheism. The controversy, like some nomadic disease, has silently shifted its seat from the head to the heart. The intellectual resistance of the nineteenth century has imperceptibly died away, and a factious and emotional opposition, compounded of debased passion and degraded ignorance, has stepped into its place.

In order to enable us to realise to ourselves as clearly as possible the exact nature of the change which has thus transformed the attitude of the scientific world towards Religion, and to demonstrate how completely the oppositionist forces of Agnosticism have broken down, it will be well, before passing on, to examine briefly a specific instance by which this noteworthy 'change of mind' on the part of scientists can be illustrated. For this purpose we cannot do better than take the important and much disputed question of the efficacy of prayer. This question was discussed in the year 1861 by Professor Tyndall, who may be fairly regarded as a leading representative of nineteenth-century Agnosticism. It has also been briefly treated in the year 1908 by Sir Oliver Lodge, admittedly a leader of the scientific thought of the twentieth century. Let us observe how different are the views expressed by these two thinkers and let us carefully inquire which of the two is right—and why he is right. This is what Professor Tyndall says:—

'At an auberge at the foot of the Rhone glacier, I met, in the summer of 1858, an athletic young priest who, after a solid breakfast, including a bottle of wine, informed me that he had come up "to bless the mountains." This was the annual custom

of the place. Year by year the Highest was entreated, by official intercessors, to make such meteorological arrangements as should ensure food and shelter for the flocks and herds of the Valaisians. A diversion of the Rhone, or a deepening of the river's bed, would, at the time I now mention, have been of incalculable benefit to the inhabitants of the valley. But the priest would have shrunk from the idea of asking the Omnipotent to open a new channel for the river, or to cause a portion of it to flow over the Grimsel Pass, and down the valley of Oberhasli to Brientz. This he would have deemed a miracle, and he did not come to ask the Creator to perform miracles, but to do something which he manifestly thought lay quite within the bounds of the natural and non-miraculous.<sup>1</sup>

What the solidity of the priest's breakfast, or the fact that it included a bottle of wine, has to do with the question of the rationality or irrationality of his prayer for fair weather the Professor does not explain; but he at once proceeds to demonstrate the absurdity of the conduct of the 'athletic young priest' by an argument of which the steps are, in effect, as follows—'The age of miracles is past'<sup>2</sup>; and the priest did not for a moment pretend to ask for a miracle. On the contrary, he thought that he was asking for something which 'lay quite within the bounds of the natural and non-miraculous.' But he was quite mistaken; for

'the principle of the Conservation of Energy teaches us that the Italian wind, gliding over the crest of the Matterhorn, is as firmly ruled as the earth in its orbital revolution round the sun; and that the fall of its vapour into clouds is exactly as much a matter of *necessity* as the return of the seasons. The dispersion, therefore, of the slightest mist by the special volition of the Eternal, would be as much a miracle as the rolling of the Rhone over the Grimsel precipices down the valley of Hasli to Meyringen and Brientz.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Fragments of Science*, vol. ii, p. 2 (7th Edn.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Therefore, Professor Tyndall concludes, the prayer of the priest was as absurd as it was futile; for

‘Science does assert that without a disturbance of natural law, quite as serious as the stoppage of an eclipse, or the rolling of the river Niagara up the Falls, no act of humiliation, individual or national, *could* call one shower from heaven, or deflect towards us a single beam of the sun.’<sup>1</sup>

Such being the view of nineteenth-century Agnosticism as to the objective efficacy of prayer—for the subjective efficacy of prayer is admitted—hear now what twentieth-century Science, as represented by Sir Oliver Lodge, has to say on the matter.

After quoting a part of the extract from Tyndall’s *Fragments of Science* cited above, Sir Oliver proceeds:—

‘Certain objections may be made to this statement of Professor Tyndall’s even from the strictly scientific point of view: the law of the conservation of energy is needlessly dragged in when it has nothing really to do with it. We ourselves, for instance, though we have no power, nor hint of any power, to override the conservation of energy, are yet readily able, by a simple physical experiment, or by an engineering operation, to deflect a ray of light, or to dissipate a mist, or divert a wind, or pump water uphill. And further objections may be made to the form of the statement, notably to the word “therefore,” as used to connect propositions entirely different in their terms. But the meaning is quite plain nevertheless. The assertion is that any act, however simple, if achieved by special volition of the Eternal, would be a miracle; and the implied dogma is that the special volition of the Eternal cannot, or at any rate does not, accomplish anything whatever in the physical world. And this dogma, although not really a deduction from any of the known principles of physical science, and possibly open to objection as a *petitio principii*, may nevertheless be taken as a somewhat exuberant statement of the generally accepted inductive teaching of orthodox science on the subject.

‘It ought, however, to be admitted at once by Natural Philo-

<sup>1</sup> *Fragments of Science*, vol. ii. p. 5 (7th Edn.).

sophers that the (alleged) unscientific character of prayer for rain depends really not upon its conflict with any known physical law, since it need involve no greater interference with the order of nature than is implied in a request to a gardener to water the garden—it does not really depend upon the impossibility of causing rain to fall when otherwise it might not—but upon the disbelief of science in any power who can and will attend and act. To prove this, let us bethink ourselves that it is not an inconceivable possibility that at some future date mankind may acquire some control over the weather, and be able to influence it; not merely in an indirect manner, as at present they can affect climate by felling forests or flooding deserts, but in some more direct fashion; in that case prayers for rain would begin again—only the petitions would be addressed, not to heaven, but to the Meteorological Office. We do not at present ask the secretary of that Government department to improve our seasons, simply because we do not think that he knows how; if we thought he did, we should not be debarred from approaching him by a suspicion of his possible non-existence, or a fear that our request would not be delivered. Professor Tyndall's dogma, if pressed, will be found to necessitate one of these last alternatives; although, superficially, it pretends to make the somewhat grotesque suggestion that the alteration requested is so complicated and involved that really, with the best intentions in the world, the Deity does not know how to do it.<sup>1</sup>

It thus becomes clear that Professor Tyndall's argument cannot be sustained. His contention is that a prayer for rain cannot be granted 'without a disturbance of natural law.' And modern Science replies that the selfsame request (though on a smaller scale) preferred to the gardener to water the garden, is granted every day without any disturbance of natural law. Obviously, therefore, the argument, in order to be of any avail, must be totally reconstructed. It must be contended that the prayer is futile, not because it is asking for a miracle, but because it is addressed to no one. In other words, that there is no Intelligence to whom such a request can be successfully preferred.

<sup>1</sup> *Man and the Universe*, pp. 7-9 (2nd Edn.).



In order to meet this altered contention, Sir Oliver proceeds to show that 'mind' is essentially different from the 'energy' to which Tyndall refers in the passage above cited. Energy is the force which does work; mind is the force which directs the work. We see a bridge spanning a river. We know that an immense amount of energy has been expended in digging the foundations, in making the bricks and mortar, and in placing them in their appropriate positions. This is the 'energy' known to Science, and it is supplied by the food consumed by the workmen in the course of the building of the bridge. But the 'mind' which designed the bridge and directed the workmen how to build, is of a totally different order. In relation to the construction of the bridge it did no work at all. It did nothing but guide and direct.

Now, the fallacy in Professor Tyndall's argument is that it ignores the existence of supra-human 'mind' in the Universe. It tacitly assumes that the energy which causes the Italian wind to glide over the crest of the Matterhorn, and the earth to travel in its orbital revolution round the sun, is not directed by any intelligent Power. Of course, if we can really endorse that view of the Universe, we are quite at liberty to accept Professor Tyndall's conclusion that prayer is, and must be, inefficacious, however unable we may be to admit the logicity of the argument by which he seeks to establish that conclusion. But what are the facts? We know that mind exists, for we see it in ourselves. We know that it exists in various degrees of perfection, for we see immense differences between one man's mental powers and those of another. And we see differences immeasur-



ably greater still between the human mind and the sub-human mind. Is it to be supposed that there is not somewhere in the Universe an Intelligence as far superior to the human mind as the human mind is superior to the mind of a monad? Even on this comparatively youthful Earth of ours, on which mind has been evolving for the trivial period of some few millions of years, we see what gigantic strides mind-development has made, and how rapidly mind develops when once it has got well under way. How much more do we know to-day than we knew a thousand, a hundred, nay, ten years ago! And how much more still shall we know, ten, a hundred, a thousand years hence! What, then, must be the present state of mental development on some world incalculably older than our own—such, for instance, as Mars? Is it to be supposed that a Martian, whose ancestors have been busily engaged in brain-development for perhaps billions of years, has not attained to a stage of intelligence immeasurably higher than that of the most powerful human intellect of which we have any knowledge? And if so, how about the inhabitants of those immeasurably older systems which the telescope reveals and the spectroscope explains? And, still more, how about that timeless Intelligence Which, as will be shown hereafter,<sup>1</sup> is as real to all true Philosophy as to Religion, and Whose unfathomable antiquity and measureless futurity are suitably veiled by Religion under the incomprehensible formula 'world without end'? Unless, therefore, we are prepared to accept the wildly improbable assumption that the most intelligent human being in this world possesses the highest mental power that

<sup>1</sup> Chapter x.

exists in any corner of the Universe, we must perforce believe that there are in existence intelligences immeasurably higher than those with which we are immediately acquainted. So that, so far from being a violent assumption, it is in the highest degree probable that there is somewhere in existence an Intelligence capable of so guiding and directing the forces of Nature as to comply with a prayer for rain, without the violation of any natural law, in much the same way—*si magna licet componere parvis*—as that in which a gardener obeys a request that he will water the garden.

See here how completely twentieth-century Science has turned the tables on the boasted Agnosticism of the nineteenth century. The agnostics accused the theologian of a flagrant *petitio principii*. We refuse, they said, to take into account in our interpretation of the Universe anything which we do not know. Among the forces of Nature there are two—Matter and Energy—about which we know a great deal. Of mind we know little. Of supra-human mind we know nothing. Therefore we insist upon confining our attention to matter and energy and human intelligence. We see that in meteorological matters, as in all other natural phenomena, matter and energy invariably obey the laws of Nature. Therefore we conclude that the existing meteorological arrangements cannot be deflected or varied except by a violation of natural law. And such a violation is contradicted by all experience. Therefore in praying for rain you are petitioning a Power of which we know nothing, to perform an operation of which we know still less.

Not so, replies modern Science. In this matter it is

you, the agnostic, who are guilty of a *petitio principii* immeasurably more flagrant than that which you falsely lay to the charge of Theology. In interpreting the Universe we are bound to take into account every force which it contains. We know that mind exists; and that it exists in vastly different degrees of intensity. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to throw overboard everything that the laws of probability enjoin—and as all knowledge is based ultimately upon probability this is only another way of saying, Unless we are prepared to throw overboard the basis of all knowledge—it is impossible to doubt that there must be in existence an Intelligence sufficiently powerful to perform, on the larger scale, that which, not only without any violation of natural law, but actually by means of natural law, the gardener performs on the smaller scale. If it be irrational to pray for rain, then cease to prefer to your servant a request which must be equally vain, because it is identical in every respect save that of magnitude. And if, on the other hand, it be reasonable to request your gardener to water the garden, then devote the rest of your life to the cultivation of those conditions, known to Religion as ‘prayer’ and ‘faith,’ which will bring you into the closest correspondence with that Supreme Mind Which—not by any violation of natural law, but by means of natural law—can so guide and direct the forces of Nature that ‘the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.’<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen from the above that the essential difference between the ‘agnostic’ science of the nineteenth century and the modern science of the twentieth century consists in the fact that the former ignores,

<sup>1</sup> Is. xxxv. 7.

while the latter recognises, the existence of a supra-human Intelligence; and it is curious, in view of this notable change in scientific thought, to observe how conspicuously the altered attitude of the opponents of Religion betokens the completeness of the failure of the agnostic assault which Religion has successfully repulsed. It is instructive also to note how that change of attitude unmasks the insincerity of the methods of attack to which Agnosticism had descended. The sleek agnostic threw himself at the feet of Truth, the arch-instructor, boasting a pretended ignorance of things, yet simulating a hunger and thirst for knowledge. And lo! Truth has taken him at his word, and has filled his hunger with good things. How is he to escape from this embarrassing hospitality? Whither is he to turn from this cruel kindness? Nauseated by the enforced bounty of the unwished-for repast, nothing remains for the baffled sceptic but to take refuge in a sullen defiance that, with childish petulance, refuses to be fed, praying only to be sent empty away. This, the last resort of scepticism, is exactly the attitude which the twentieth-century atheist is substituting for the agnosticism of the nineteenth century.

It is not to be denied that, in thus putting forward their newly-adopted atheistic code in place of their defeated agnosticism, the frustrated assailants of Religion are acting for their own immediate purposes very wisely, if not very well. They are well-advised in thus abandoning the hopeless task of attempting to dethrone Religion by means of intellectual weapons. And it may almost be said that, for their own purposes, they are well-advised in substituting a blind opposition conducted on the lines of 'invincible ignorance.' For the fact is that ignorance is the only force that con-



stitutes any serious menace to Religion. Truth is the one arbiter to whose jurisdiction the atheist dare not submit. Like the presiding judge of some supreme tribunal, Truth sits in the seat of judgment, inflexible, undethroneable, meting out to every suitor the edicts of a tranquil and unerring justice. No suit is too high, no claim too remote, to be entertained by that court of universal jurisdiction. No legal subtlety is too refined to escape the penetration of that infallible wisdom. The most crafty advocate has nothing to hope, the most timid defendant has nothing to fear, from the unbending impartiality of the stern decrees that issue with pitiless rigour from that heart of stone and those lips of steel. Obviously, the cause of scepticism, still smarting from the recollection of intellectual defeat, is not likely, for the present at all events, to submit itself again to the arbitrament of such a judge, who is moved by neither fear nor favour, and who knows neither pardon nor appeal.

In such a dilemma it is not unnatural that the defeated agnostic should seek to shift the venue of the proceedings. Nothing is left him now but to disclaim the jurisdiction of the judge of his choice, even though in so doing he is reduced to the necessity of denying the supremacy of the supreme. 'Truth!' he exclaims with Pilate of old, 'Truth! What is Truth?' And then, like Pilate, he turns away, neither waiting, nor wishing, for a reply.

In estimating the probable result of the altered attack which Atheism is thus preparing for Religion by substituting an active and aggressive ignorance for a passive and apologetic disclaimer of knowledge, and in considering what is the most effective method of frustrating the threatened assault, it is important to



ascertain the nature and constitution of this Religion which we are concerned to defend. That Religion is an existing phenomenon there can be no manner of doubt. Whether the various beliefs which together constitute Religion are true—all, or some, of them—or are false, this one thing at least is certain about them, that they exist. For there they are, plain for the world to see. All historic and all prehistoric records prove to conclusion that Religion, in some form or other, has always been, and still is, a potent factor in human life. What, then, are the characteristics of this Religion, and what are the laws of its being? It consists of numerous beliefs which somehow or other have managed to cling together and group themselves into a definite form, in spite of the disintegrating forces of persecution and ridicule, and now, as we have seen, in spite also of all that Science can do to dissolve them. Are these connected beliefs nothing but a fortuitous congeries of isolated units, brought together by chance and fashioned by caprice? Are they but the vain imaginings of the poet and the mystic—the unsubstantial embodiment of human hopes and human fears? Or are they the product of some great law working in the psychical plane of existence, just as the Earth and its inhabitants, both vegetal and animal, are the product of law working in the physical plane? Can it be that Religion is a psychical cosmos complete in itself? And if so, is it possible to trace in the anatomy of Religion a past history and a constitution comparable to the past history and present constitution of the physical cosmos with which we are familiar?

It is obvious that an immense practical importance attaches to the answers that can, and must, be given to these interrogatories. If the past history and the

The history is a product

present structure of Religion can be shown to be identical with the history and structure of corresponding phenomena that are to be found in the physical universe, then Religion at once acquires a new status, hitherto unsuspected, in the constitution of things. Then Religion becomes, not an accident, but a necessity, as constituting an integral part of the totality of existences, as fixed and immovable as the 'everlasting hills,' as living and active as the Earth's inhabitants, both vegetal and animal.

If such a proposition can be satisfactorily established, it is clear that it at once disposes of any cause for alarm on behalf of Religion which the pending atheistic attack might otherwise have induced. If it can be shown that Religion is a constituent part of the permanent fabric of the Universe—an integral factor in the eternal scheme and arrangement of things—then it is certain that Religion has nothing to fear from the most destructive engines that ignorance and malice can devise for its destruction. There is an ancient tradition that Hannibal, when crossing the Alps on his march to Rome, blasted the obstructing rocks with vinegar. Of this story, which is told by Livy,<sup>1</sup> and is mentioned by Juvenal,<sup>2</sup> we may believe just as much or as little as we choose. But certain it is that the Alpine rocks have succeeded in concealing under an appearance of entire immobility the secret shock of the alleged invasion. At all events they show to-day no traces of the pretended assault, and the snow-clad heights still rear their adamantine crests unshaken to the sky, in sublime indifference to the chemical solvents said to have been acetified for their destruction.

<sup>1</sup> Livy, *xxi.* c. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Juvenal, *Satire* x. 153.

The modern opponent of Christianity appears to imagine that the structure of Religion can be dissolved or shattered by a similar method of treatment. How much credence is to be attached to the mythical exploit of the Carthaginian general we are not concerned to inquire. But it is very certain that if Religion possesses such a status in the Universe as that above suggested, the dissolution of Religion will require some more drastic solvent than the acetic acid of a cheap scepticism—some more powerful fulminate than the forceless invectives of ignorant denunciation.

But though the permanent fabric of Religion may be thus immune from the most violent assaults that ignorance and passion can bring to bear upon it, unfortunately this immunity does not extend to the human beings who are called upon to practise in their lives the victorious and unassailable doctrines which Religion has successfully established as the indestructible materials of which the structure of Religion is built. In order to assist us to realise this fact and the consequences to which it gives rise, let us pursue a little further the idea suggested in the foregoing pages that Religion may be a psychical cosmos, comparable to the physical cosmos with which we are familiar. In the physical universe we know that the world is peopled by living inhabitants; and we know also that these organic beings readily succumb to destructive forces which would make little or no impression on the inorganic structure of our planet. Analogy, or rather homology, would suggest that the same conditions may prevail in the psychical sphere. If Religion is a psychical cosmos, we may expect to find that it contains two distinct orders of Truth. On the one hand, there will be unorganised truths, corre-

sponding to the inorganic material of which the structure of our planet is composed. And, on the other hand, there will be organised truths, corresponding to the organic inhabitants of the physical world. And, further, we may expect to find that of these two orders of truths the organised truths are more delicate in constitution, and therefore more sensitive to destructive forces, just as the organic beings of the physical sphere are more destructible than the inorganic fabric of the Earth.

Translating these ideas into practical form, and applying them to the problem before us, we see that, in view of the altered method of attack with which Religion is now threatened, it is no longer sufficient to establish the scientific status of Religion by showing that what we may, perhaps, call the material fabric of Religion consists of truths as real and indestructible as the material substance of our planet. For there still remain to be safeguarded and protected those more subtle, and more destructible, organised truths which correspond to the organic inhabitants of the physical sphere, and which prove their vitality by the fact that they regulate and govern the practical application of Religion to human life and human conduct. In other words, besides establishing the status of Religion on a permanent basis, we must now also specially provide for the requirements of the votaries of Religion; and the necessity for making this special provision is enormously enhanced by the nature of the threatened attack.

The opposition of those who, pleading ignorance (whether real or pretended), profess a willingness to learn, is sufficiently met by a demonstration of the truth of the matters which they call in question. But



such a demonstration furnishes no sufficient answer to the man who not only professes ignorance, but also refuses to be taught. In order to successfully proselytise the sceptic of this stubborn denomination, it is necessary to supplement the *argumentum ad rem* by an *argumentum ad hominem*. He must be shown not only that Religion is true and substantial, but also that he personally has something to gain by practising obedience to the dictates of Religion, something to lose by disobedience. Accordingly, we must now frame our arguments with a special view to these twofold requirements. They must be expressed not only in terms of truth and untruth, but also in terms of gain and loss. Whilst still continuing our efforts to prove that Religion is scientifically true, we must also aim at showing that Religion has something substantial to offer, and something real to threaten.

It is scarcely necessary to enlarge here upon the supreme importance of the issue involved in the problem before us. It is an issue in which all other interests merge and disappear. For, now, what is our life? What have I, or what has any one, to gain in this sorrowful world? What have we to lose in the measureless futurity? Why have our lives been given to us? Is there some supreme object, some high purpose, which, for each one of us, existence is powerful either to accomplish or to annul? Is there any truth or substance in Religion's declaration that 'he that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it'?<sup>1</sup> What, in this strange paradox, does Religion mean by 'finding his life'? And what, again, by 'losing his life for My sake'? These are questions which are not undeserving of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 39.



attention, for they possess an intense personal interest for every man who has a life to find—and a life to lose.

We shall, therefore, in the ensuing pages, endeavour to show that from the philosophic and scientific, quite as much as from the religious, point of view, the promises and threatenings of Religion are substantial and real—in fact, the only really substantial things in the world; so substantial that this finding or losing of life comprises everything that is really comprehended in the terms 'gain' and 'loss'; so real that every man is intensely and vitally interested in finding a meaning for Religion's paradox, and in making the practical realisation of that meaning the primary purpose of his life.

Before, however, we proceed with the argument, it may be not amiss, in view of certain opinions which are now widely prevalent, to say just one word with regard to the special need which exists at the present time for recognising and emphasising the interest which of right belongs to the subject which I have ventured to submit to the public in the ensuing pages. It is not to be denied that during the last few years a great and sinister change has passed over the mental attitude of the community towards things in general. The altered conditions, which have transformed the factors of the great religious controversy, have also invaded every department of intellectual activity. Everywhere a craving for sensational excitement has driven purely intellectual gratifications out of the field. It seems almost as if the restless fires of emotion had, for the moment, succeeded in drying up the very springs and fountains that feed the deep waters of thought.

In this lamentable state of things it is incumbent upon every man to do what in him lies towards redirecting the current of public taste back into normal and healthy channels. That the present lapse of the public taste in matters intellectual is anything more than a passing phase, I cannot bring myself to believe. The proposition that intellectual pleasures are to be preferred to purely sensational excitement is one which, in the long run, every educated man and woman is bound to endorse. And that an intense dramatic, and even romantic, interest attaches to the shaping of our lives along the lines prescribed by Religion, as properly understood, is a conclusion which is as old as Religion, and which every one who chooses can establish for himself by making practical experiment. I am persuaded, therefore, that the day is not far distant when public taste in these matters will resume the faith of its childhood, when it will return once more to its forsaken creed and build again its broken altars. I am convinced that the time is rapidly approaching when it will be recognised anew that the true business of life is to be sought and found in intellectual, rather than in sensational, gratifications; and when it will be acknowledged that the highest and most enthralling of all interests is that which attaches to the practical solution of the paramount problem set before us by Religion.

If the ensuing chapters succeed in contributing in any degree to the accomplishment of this high purpose, if they assist at all in hastening the dethronement of the false idols of sensational ignorance and the restoration of the worship of a true ideal, they will have fulfilled the purpose for which they were written, and will have amply justified their existence.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PROBLEM OF LIFE

IT is a fact familiar to most of us that memory has a habit of occasionally recording some seemingly insignificant event with a vividness which appears quite out of proportion to its intrinsic importance. Without effort or intention on our part some scrap of information, picked up we know not where, some fragment of an otherwise forgotten conversation, some incident forming part of an unremembered story, seems to effect for itself a permanent lodgment in the brain, and remains with its possessor, an unbidden guest, long after the surrounding circumstances have disappeared.

It is not easy to explain the persistence with which these uninvited intruders assert themselves, or to discover what are the peculiar characteristics by virtue of which they succeed in recommending themselves to the memory as honoured guests. That a thousand important facts which we wish to remember should fade out of recollection, while a few incidents, to which at the time we attached no special importance, should remain, is a phenomenon of which various explanations may be suggested. Those who are inclined to mysticism may see in such mnemonic freaks traces of the working of what modern metaphysicians term the Subconscious Mind. Those again, who, without being mystics, maintain the teleological belief that the

events of life are not fortuitous but designed, and that they possess a meaning and a purpose deeper and more abiding than appears on the surface, will discover in these strangely self-assertive visitants suggestive evidence that no experience is ever really forgotten, and that even events of comparative insignificance possess the faculty of effecting an indelible impression upon the mind. And even those of us who are neither mystics nor teleologists will readily admit that recollections, thus specially recorded, succeed in exercising over their possessor a kind of preferential right of audience. However defective their original claim to the distinction may be, they acquire in course of time the right which legally attaches to long-continued possession—as if the very pertinacity with which they are constantly reminding us of their existence had conferred upon them a sort of prescriptive title to be heard. From all of which it is clear that, for one reason or another, these mysterious products of mnemonic idiosyncrasy are entitled to receive, or at all events succeed in obtaining, a special share of attention.

Speaking from my own experience in this matter, I find, when I look back into the past, that I am conscious of two fragments of conversations in which I took part years ago, and which, though they made no particular impression upon my mind at the moment, have, nevertheless, succeeded in photographing themselves upon my recollection with a distinctness that defies obliteration. I am conscious, moreover, of the existence of what seems to be a strong connecting-link between the two. Widely separated though they were, both in time and place, and distinguished from one another by the circumstance that they contain expres-



sions of different—in fact, of conflicting—opinions, they have, nevertheless, come to be associated together in my mind by the pertinacity of self-assertion that is common to both. Standing out in conspicuous relief amid the fainter and less prominent impressions by which they are surrounded, it is impossible to look back at the one without simultaneously catching sight of the other. By the very act, therefore, of rendering themselves indelible they have automatically registered themselves as inseparable. And thus, finding it impossible to separate them in my mind, I have come to regard them as teleologically, if not logically, connected together.

The first of the two conversations to which I have alluded was on this wise:—

I happened one evening to be dining, as a guest, in the hall of one of the great City Companies, and on taking my place at the table I found myself seated beside a youthful-looking matron of girlish appearance and lively manners. I had never seen her before, and have never seen her since, and have long ago forgotten her name; but in the conversation which ensued between us she gave utterance to a sentiment which I have never forgotten, and which I shall never forget.

After a few of the usual preliminary platitudes we glided into an easy conversation, in the course of which she gave me some account of herself and her doings. She told me that she had been married some two or three years to an invalid husband, and had two sickly children. Though her family was socially well connected, their means were small; and the heavy expense entailed by illness, coupled with her husband's inability to practise his profession, had reduced their income to a minimum. 'In fact,' she said, 'sometimes, when I go



to bed at night, I scarcely know where to-morrow's meals are to come from.'

I remember that I remarked that she certainly seemed to have her full share of trouble; and I asked her whether she did not find the anxieties of life almost overwhelming. 'Anxiety!' she replied, 'oh no; I never feel that. Troubles always seem to me so intensely interesting. Every difficulty that comes along is a perpetual source of interest and wonder, to see how God will bring me out of it. What study could be more enthralling? People talk of an incident being as good as a play. My life is much better than a play to me. To stand aside, as it were, and watch, from an impersonal point of view, God's ever-varying, but never-failing, methods of extricating me from each tangle of troubles into which He leads me, is a thousand times more engrossing than the most thrilling drama that ever was written. Knowing, as I do, from past experience, that in every difficulty He will, somehow or other, land me safely on the other side, I can find no room for anxiety. The only element of doubt in the problem is contained in the absorbing question: How is He going to do it? And it is just this tincture of doubt and uncertainty that gives to life its one excitement, and to Religion all its zest. Why,' she added, with a fine touch of enthusiasm, 'if you were to strip life of what you call its cares and anxieties, you would rob it of nearly all its interest, and quite all its worth.'

As I listened, the music of my companion's words seemed to smite upon my ear with the pulse of a chord that was half incitement and half rebuke. How far, I thought to myself, am I below the dizzy heights of Faith to which my unknown monitress has climbed!

Can it be that this young girl has succeeded in charm-  
ing from existence a secret of which I have failed to  
possess myself? Is it really true that the object of life  
is to learn the one great lesson of Trust in God? Is it  
indeed possible here and now, in this mundane life of  
ours, to live with Him, above the clouds of doubt and  
care? And is the true function of Evolution to teach  
us to breathe the rare atmosphere of those serene  
altitudes? To these momentous questions the girl  
beside me seemed to furnish a living affirmance. And  
as I gazed, not without admiration, at my youthful  
companion, I instinctively called to mind the words  
of that superlative eulogium: 'I say unto you, I have  
not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.'

The second conversation to which I have alluded  
occurred as follows:—

I happened one day to be talking to a young mother, who had recently been privileged to introduce a new member into the human family. Knowing that she professed to entertain certain more or less unorthodox views on the subject of Religion, I inquired with some curiosity what sort of religious education she intended to give her boy. 'Oh,' she replied with alacrity, 'I have quite made up my mind about that. I shall teach him the New Testament, but not the Old.' 'And why not the Old?' I asked. 'Because,' she answered, 'I will never teach him to believe anything which I do not believe myself.'

Such are the two fragments of conversation which, ranging themselves side by side in my recollection, have gradually, but irresistibly, forced themselves upon my attention. They stand before me as champions of two rival causes; and, like importunate advocates, they seem to press for judgment. The

issue which they raise lies deep in the anatomy of Truth. Is it possible to dismember Religion in the wholesale manner suggested by my second interlocutor? Could Religion outlive the rigour of so drastic an operation? And is it to be supposed that Christianity could survive, if the Religion of the Old Testament were swept away? It is certain that the Author of Christianity regarded the two as inseparable. 'Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.' That the two have, as a matter of fact, proved themselves inseparable in the past is attested by the history of the last two thousand years. And my unknown monitress furnishes eloquent testimony to the fact that the Judaic Religion still takes a vital part in the most vigorous and healthy religious activity of the present day. For I cannot bring myself to believe that the faith-militant which she displayed could have been learnt in any other school than that of 'the law and the prophets.' It is too true an echo of the old-world faith to be mistaken for any other. It bears the genuine hall-mark of the warrior-faith of Abraham and of Moses, of David and of Daniel—the faith that rejoices in tribulations; that takes its pastime in all turbulent and tumultuous things; that finds peace in the cataract and rest in the hurricane;—that storm-tossed and tempestuous faith, the stormy petrel of Religion, that makes its home in the whirlwind and builds its nest in Euroclydon. Am I to suppose that faith such as hers owes nothing to the wild beauty of the old-world tales that adorn the history of Jehovah's

people? Am I to believe that my young enthusiast has never thrilled to the soul-stirring stories of Joseph and his brethren, or of David and Goliath?—has never kindled to the glow of that dauntless courage that dared to fling in the face of overwhelming odds the message of sublime defiance: ‘The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee’? If, then, Christ Himself decreed that the two Covenants should be joined together in a perpetual alliance; and if the history of twenty centuries has witnessed the unbroken fulfilment of that decree; and if that union is still a lively reality to those who practise the Religion of Christ to-day; is there not good ground for believing that there is between these two great branches of Religion some natural bond of union which it is impossible to disrupt? Undoubtedly their indissoluble conjunction is a theological, historical, and contemporary fact. Is it also a scientific necessity? Why did Christ graft His Religion on to Judaism, instead of planting a new and independent Religion of His own? Is there a scientific reason for what He did? And if so, what is it? Can Science, who knows so much of the things on earth, and something even of the things in heaven, tell me this? Is there anything in the structure or the functions of Religion that can explain it; or is there anything in Nature that at all resembles it?

It is obvious that questions such as these cannot be answered on scientific lines without making some sort of an examination into the constitution of Truth itself. The inter-relations of whole and part are so subtly and so inextricably intertwined together that it is impossible to investigate the laws which govern the one without



also examining the laws which control the other. Just as our knowledge of molar gravitation is incomplete until we have seen how it arises from the sum of molecular attractions; and just as the value of molecular attraction is inappreciable until we have measured it by the results which it effects in the production of molar gravitation; so here it is impossible to proceed far with any attempted analysis of the constitution of Religion without constantly coming into contact with the still larger problem of the analysis of Truth as a whole. Hence the scientific investigation of the inter-relations, functional and morphological, of the two great Orders of Religion, the Judaic and the Christian, cannot be successfully conducted without seeking an answer to the wider question: What is the place which Religion occupies in that larger whole—that vast body of truths which comprises the whole of knowledge, scientific and philosophic, as well as religious? And thus a scientific analysis of Religion necessarily involves an inquiry into the structure and anatomy of Truth itself.

All these questions and problems, of immense interest to Science, and involving issues of vast practical importance to Religion, seemed to thrust themselves upon me as often as I called to mind my two fragmentary, but irrepressible, conversations; and as I pondered, at first unresistingly, and in the end irresistibly, over these things, my thoughts by degrees took shape and form, until all at once, like some germinating seed, they seemed to yield to the touch of Evolution, automatically ranging themselves into the morphological order in which I have endeavoured to exhibit them in the ensuing pages.



## CHAPTER III

### THE STRUCTURE OF KNOWLEDGE

ONE of the most engrossing subjects of philosophical research is that which relates to the question of the origin of intelligence. We see before us, in the Animal Kingdom, organisms which exhibit every grade of intellectual power. At the lower end of the series we observe beings possessed of little or no intelligence—creatures incapable of performing any mental effort, and exercising only the instinctive powers which enable them to effectuate the humble cycle of activities into which their unconscious lives are rounded. Above these lowly organisms we see animals possessed of various degrees of intellectual intensity, finally culminating in Man.

Out of the facts thus disclosed to our contemplation the question naturally arises: What is the cause of this gigantic growth of intellect? We believe that all these organisms, whose mental powers are now so different, are descendants from a common ancestor, whose intellectual capacity was as low as—or even lower than—that of the lowliest beings in the series. We believe, too, that this growth of intellect has been effected by the mutual action and reaction of the internal forces possessed by the organisms themselves and the external forces by which they are environed. What, then, is the internal factor, the possession of which has

enabled one line of beings to develop into man, and the want of which has condemned all other animals to those lower grades of intelligence in which they now find themselves ranked? It is no answer to this question to say that man owes his superior intelligence to the fact that he has acquired, in the course of his evolution, a larger, heavier, and more powerful brain than that possessed by any other animal. For to this answer the question still remains: What is the determining factor which has induced this superior development of cerebral power? It is certainly possible, and indeed highly probable, that an occasional impulse in the path of superior cerebral development may have been furnished here and there by some fortuitous superiority in the external circumstances which happened to surround some more fortunate organism, such, for instance, as a richer or more abundant food-supply. But any such occasional advantage is insufficient to explain the enormous and continuous development which has separated by such an immeasurable gap the intellectual capacity of the higher animals from that of the lower. This can only be accounted for by the supposition that the organisms which have attained to the higher stages must have achieved their superiority by means of some organ which was not possessed, or, at all events, which was not possessed in the same degree of perfection, by the lower and less intelligent beings. What, then, is the organ which has thus, in process of time, been the means of differentiating the more intelligent organisms from the less intelligent?

Where are we to look for an answer to this transcendent question? At first sight it may well appear almost hopeless to attempt to trace the history of a process the larger, if not the more important, part of

which was elaborated long before the commencement of the human period. Undoubtedly, an immense amount of intellectualisation had taken place before the human species appeared upon our planet. The difference between the mental capacities of a monad, on the one hand, and those of the highest subhuman beings, on the other, is immeasurable; and the length of time which must have elapsed during the effectuation of this triumph of cerebral development is incalculable. Obviously, we cannot expect to find any historical, or even any traditional, record of events which occurred at a time when nothing worthy of the name of intellect existed, and when the union of thought and articulation had not yet given birth to speech.

But though it is thus impossible to adduce any contemporary evidence of the earlier portion of the history of brain-development, it is evident that a large and important part of the process has fallen within the human period; and it is, therefore, well worth while to inquire whether any record is to be found, contemporary with at least a portion of this part of the process, which may serve to throw any light upon the subject of the inquiry.

A scientific study of language discloses the fact that words often contain within themselves the record of a history, not only of themselves, but also of the ideas from which they are derived. Just as architecture has been defined as 'frozen music,' so language may be defined as 'petrified thought.' Words are ideas clothed in bodily shape. And thus language is the incrustation of primordial ideas which, in spite of the periodic changes of thought, have still retained something of their pristine form. And hence a word is not infre-

quently found to contain within its structure a buried truth of profound scientific interest.

The unsuspected truths which are thus occasionally to be detected in the stereotyped forms of words are just as important, from the scientific point of view, as any other fact in Nature. And this scientific value, which they share with all other phenomena, they derive from the fact that they are themselves products of Evolution. For words, like animals, have pedigrees. And those pedigrees have been moulded and shaped by definite laws. With the exception of a comparatively few recently coined words, which for present purposes may be ignored, all words have come down to us from an immemorial antiquity. Consequently, they have assumed their present forms, not in obedience to the caprice of any particular individual, but in conformity with the laws of Nature. They are what they are, not by manufacture, but by growth. Hence we may be absolutely certain that a word's modern structure is a survival. It is a present record of a vanished incident in the history of Intellect. And by studying it we can transport ourselves back to those distant regions of Thought in which the dead truths, which are now embalmed in the word's present structure, were actual, living, contemporary facts.

From the foregoing considerations it follows that the science of Philology may occasionally be usefully invoked for the purpose of recalling ideas and beliefs which have long since passed away. By this method it is sometimes possible to translate ourselves back into the forgotten, but not wholly unrecorded, past, there to view, as contemporary spectators, a re-created panorama of events. Let us see whether, in the present instance, Philology will respond to our call.

It is obvious that there are two distinct stages in the history of intelligence. The first consists of the perception of the existence of surrounding objects. The second, of learning to understand the nature and properties of those objects. Or, to express these two ideas in two words, the first stage is to *apprehend*; the second is to *comprehend*.

Now, it is evident that both of these two words are, from the philological point of view, one word. For both are derived from one root, *hend*. And it is known to philologists that this root is derived from the root *hand*, the *a* having changed into *e* in composition, just as *scando* in composition becomes *ascendo*, and as *cando* becomes *accendo*. And this root *hand* is no other than our English word *hand*.<sup>1</sup> Hence it appears that the framers of language who are responsible for the two terms *apprehend* and *comprehend*, by which are expressed the two stages in the history of intelligence, were, rightly or wrongly, of the opinion that the organ which was the efficient cause of both of these two stages in intellectual growth was, primarily and principally, not the eye, nor the ear, nor the mouth, nor any other organ than the *hand*.

<sup>1</sup> *Philological Society's Proceedings*, vol. ii. p. 251. Unfortunately the Latin language exhibits no root in the form of *hand*. But *hand* is philologically the same word as *manus*. The change of *manus* into *hand* has an interesting history. For the loss in *hand* of the *m* of *manus* compare *earn*, which is philologically the same word as the Latin *merere*. As regards the introduction of the *d* of *hand* after the *n* of *manus*, this is illustrated by such words as *sound*, which is the same word as the Latin *sonare*, and *thunder*, which is identical with *tonare*. It has, moreover, been pointed out that, although the *a* of *manus* is short (*mānus*), the word is occasionally placed in such a position in poetry as shows that, in speech, it was accentuated as if the *a* were long—e.g. 'Út tuum eriperet, mánum arripuit, mórdicus'—*Terence*. The probable explanation of this curious fact is that *mānus* came to be pronounced *mandus*, which form of the word at once betrays its family relationship to *hand*.



If, now, we examine these two words a little more closely, we find that the idea expressed by *apprehend* is that of thrusting one's hand (*hend*) in front of one (*pre*), right up to (*ap*) the object to be 'apprehended.' In other words, the notion is that of *touching* the object with the hand. This process the framers of the word evidently considered to have been, in the early stages of brain-development, the principal, if not the only, ingredient in the act of perceiving the existence of an external object. And those who have studied the subject of the origin of sight will doubtless be of opinion that they were not far wrong.<sup>1</sup>

The second word, by which the second stage in the evolution of intelligence is expressed, again contains the notion of holding out the hand in front of one (*pre-hend*) towards the object to be 'comprehended.' But the prefix *com*, unlike the prefix *ap*, signifies something more than merely touching the object. This prefix imports the idea of '*together*,' or '*in conjunction*'; and signifies, therefore, that the object is to be treated, not merely as a thing to be touched, but as a thing possessing at least two parts, which are to be treated *together*, or *in conjunction*. In other words, *apprehend* implies that the object is to be touched in respect of one only of its dimensions; *comprehend* signifies that it is to be touched in respect of two or more of its dimensions together, that is to say, simultaneously,—that the hand is to touch two or more of its sides together, or in conjunction. And thus, while *apprehend* means simply to *touch*, *comprehend* signifies to *grasp*.<sup>2</sup> Hence a philo-

<sup>1</sup> See the author's *Conflict of Truth*, pp. 473-481, where the origin of sight through contactual experiences obtained by means of a *feeler* is fully discussed.

<sup>2</sup> For the philological reasons stated above it is clear that the original meaning of *apprehend* was simply to 'touch.' The word, however, at an

logical examination of the words *apprehend* and *comprehend* shows that they contain, imbedded in their structures and preserved for us, as it were, in a crystallised form, the notions of the early framers of language as to what were originally the essential ingredients in the two processes of *perception* and *understanding*. And the record of primitive ideas on this all-important subject, which these two words have thus transmitted to us in a permanent and indestructible form, proves incontestably that, rightly or wrongly, those early thinkers, who have thus embalmed their ideas for us, were of opinion that in either case the hand, or some rudimentary organ of the nature of a hand, was the organ which played the leading part in the process; and, further, that the distinction between the two processes lay in the fact that the former confined itself to the perception of the object *in respect of one only of its dimensions*, while the latter consisted in seizing hold of *two or more of its dimensions together*.

Now, it is beyond dispute that the authors of the word *comprehend* have in this term expressed with perfect accuracy the fundamental truth which lies at the very base of all knowledge properly so-called. All

early date acquired the meaning of *taking hold of, seizing*. But even after *apprehend* had acquired its most advanced signification, the original distinction between *apprehend* and *comprehend* still remained the characteristic difference between the two. Thus Webster, in distinguishing the two words, says: 'The very idea of God supposes that He may be *apprehended*, though not *comprehended*, by rational beings.' In other words, to apprehend God means to appreciate the fact that He exists; to comprehend Him means to *know* Him in the sense of understanding something of His attributes.

In the present volume the two words are used in their primordial, etymological significations. That is to say, *apprehend* is used as meaning *to touch an object, and thereby become aware of its existence*; *comprehend*, as signifying *to grasp, so as to understand or know, to some extent, the nature, constitution, or attributes of the object*.

our knowledge of the universe around us is based upon our knowledge of material phenomena. It is impossible to think of any immaterial thing until we have first learnt to think of material things. Indeed, we cannot frame a thought of immaterial things except in forms of the material; and we can only express our thoughts, whether of material or of immaterial things, in terms of the material. When we say that there are two sides to a question, we are obviously applying to the immaterial conception 'a question' a form of thought which had been previously derived from a material object. If it had never been discovered that a stone, or a tree, or a hill has two sides, no one would ever have conceived the idea that a question can have two sides. If, again, we had never learnt to *look over* a material obstacle we should never have learnt to *overlook* an injury. If we had never known how to *fill* a vessel *full* of water we should never have thought of *fulfilling* an obligation. In every case it is clear that our knowledge of material phenomena came first, and our knowledge of immaterial phenomena came later. The latter is derived from, and wholly dependent upon, the former.

What, then, was the first lesson of all which primitive intelligent beings learnt concerning the properties of material objects, after they had first acquired the faculty of perceiving the existence of such objects? Obviously, the most important of such primordial lessons, so far as its intellectual consequences are concerned, even if not the first in point of date, was that which disclosed the fact that such objects possess more dimensions than one. This discovery was the starting-point of all knowledge properly so-called. It was the alpha in the alphabet of understanding.

Until this discovery had been made intellectual progress was practically at a standstill.

Imagine an insect of a low order of intelligence, say, a caterpillar, crawling along a flat board in a lengthwise direction. Obviously there is nothing in this proceeding that is at all calculated to suggest to its perceptive faculties the fact that the board possesses more dimensions than one. The only idea, if we may apply so advanced a term to so humble an intellect, that the experience which it is thus deriving from the board is at all calculated to arouse in its sensorium is that of length. If, on arriving at the end of the board, it should happen to turn to the right or left and proceed to crawl transversely across the board, still its only perception will be one of length. And even if, on arriving at the side of the board, it should happen to crawl over the edge and proceed to traverse the thickness of the board till it reaches the other side, the only impression which it will receive will, once more, be that of length. There is nothing in what it has been doing that is at all likely to suggest to it that the three different directions in which it has been travelling represent three properties of the board, namely, the three dimensions of length, breadth, and thickness. As long as these three dimensions are treated, not simultaneously but consecutively, it is easy to see that such an animal would, in all probability, repeat—as such animals have repeated—this process for ages and ages, without making a single step of advance in the direction of acquiring any knowledge of the dimensional properties of Matter.

But the moment that some animal, by means of an organ of the nature of a rudimentary hand, succeeded in consciously *grasping simultaneously* two sides of an



object, it made a discovery more momentous than any other discovery before or since. For at that instant it learnt a lesson in mechanics which was the fountain and source of all our knowledge of the material, and thence of the immaterial, universe. In that single act it lifted itself and its intellectual successors from the primitive stage of *apprehension* to the derivative stage of *comprehension*. It disclosed a secret which was destined to prove the starting-point of a new era of intelligence. And thus the first detection of this fundamental property of Matter marked the birthday of Knowledge.

Now, this primordial discovery is precisely the fact expressed by the term *comprehend*. It is the message which antiquity has bequeathed to all time, enshrined and immortalised in the structure of this monumental word. And this simple, almost insignificant, distinction between apprehension and comprehension, which is the root and source of all understanding and all intellectual development, is so unobtrusive that it has almost escaped detection; so minute that, like Christ's grain of mustard seed, it is less than all the seeds of thought; and yet, like that mustard seed, since it was first sown it has grown into such a tree of knowledge that all things on earth, and some even of the things in heaven, have come and lodged in its branches.

Here, then, observe the truth which Philology has thus detected for us in the words *apprehend* and *comprehend*. The difference between the two stages of perception and understanding lies in the fact that the one process regards the object in question in respect of one only of its dimensions—looks at it only from one point of view. The other studies it in respect of at least two of its dimensions simultaneously—observes

it from at least two different standpoints at one and the same time. This is *the* distinction between instinct and intelligence, between apprehension and comprehension, between perception and knowledge.

The great principle, thus recorded in the word *comprehend*, is a principle of universal application. Originally it was, of course, applied only to material objects—and to material objects small enough to be grasped in the hand. But it is equally applicable to objects of the largest dimensions. And, as applied to these, it means that, in order to be comprehended, they must be regarded from two or more points of view, both or all of those points of view being considered together (*com*)—that is to say, in their relations to one another. It applies, moreover, not only to single objects, but also to groups of objects; and, in fact, to the aggregate of the material universe regarded as a whole.

Further than this, it extends from the material to the immaterial, penetrating through the physical to the metaphysical. Whatever be the object under contemplation—be it an atom, or a world, or a sidereal system, or even the whole material universe; or be it a thought, or a scientific fact, or a religious doctrine, or even the whole body of Science, or the whole system of Religion—in every case the distinction between apprehension and comprehension still holds good, insisting that all knowledge, as distinguished from mere perception, can be obtained only by studying the object under contemplation from more points of view than one, and by considering together the different views thus obtained; insisting, moreover, that knowledge of the object in question becomes more and more *comprehensive* in proportion as we conduct our study of it from more and more numerous points of view; so that

the highest attainable knowledge of any object is reached only when we have exhausted all available standpoints from which it may thus be examined, and have moulded and compacted into one synthesised whole the various aspects which the object has presented to our view when regarded from these different standpoints.

Such being the nature of the intellectual process of *comprehension*, it is obvious that the first step towards comprehending any phenomenon is to look about for two or more different standpoints from which we may study it. Having, from one point of view, *apprehended* its existence, the next thing to be done is to endeavour to find a second standpoint from which we may secure a different view of the phenomenon. If no such second standpoint can be found, our knowledge of the phenomenon can never progress beyond the stage of apprehension. Only when we have found a second standpoint, have made our observations therefrom, and have compared together the results of the observations thus obtained, do we begin to comprehend the phenomenon.

It will, of course, have been observed that the foregoing is a purely scientific conclusion, deduced from purely scientific considerations. And we have now to inquire how far these scientific principles are recognised and provided for by Religion. In order to obtain an answer to this inquiry we have but to open the Bible, in order to see that they are adopted—or, rather, anticipated—on every page. The very structure of the Bible is specially so framed as to furnish the materials requisite for the comprehension of Religion. In the first place, the Bible is divided, as every one knows, into two parts—the Old Testament and the

New. Here are two codes which present to us two different aspects of Religion. The one places before us Religion as viewed from the standpoint of Judaism; the other, as viewed from the standpoint of Christianity. Whether or no we accept as true the statements contained in either Testament, every one will admit that they regard Religion from two very different points of view. What those points of view are, and what are their relations to one another, are questions which will be more fully discussed immediately. Here it is sufficient to observe, for the moment, that they differ materially from one another; and consequently they together supply at all events two of the requisite standpoints which are necessary in order to enable us to comprehend Religion.

And, in the next place, each of these two codes presents its own subject-matter from at least two different points of view. The purpose of Religion being to establish a communion between man and God, it necessarily follows that, in order that this object may be attained, Religion must be presented to us in two aspects—the one the doctrinal, and the other the practical. We must first be told what things we ought to do and what things we ought to leave undone; and then we must be shown the practical application of these precepts to the concerns of actual life. Accordingly we find these requirements adequately provided for in either of the two Testaments. In the Old Testament ‘the law and the prophets’ give us the doctrinal portion of Religion; while the historical books, by narrating the manner in which the lives which they record were variously affected by religious or irreligious influences, illustrate for us how lives are affected by the commands and prohibitions which the law and the prophets pro-



pound. A similar dual function is performed by the various books of the New Testament. In the doctrinal portions of the Gospels and Acts and in the Epistles are to be found the abstract precepts of Christianity; while the narrative portions of those books furnish us with concrete illustrations of their application to the actual concerns of life.

Now, if we examine with a little care the division of the Bible into the Old and New Testaments, we shall find that it is a much more curious phenomenon than would at first sight appear. The Old Testament contains a complete record of the Jewish Religion. The New gives us an equally complete exposition of the principles and precepts of Christianity. Either contains within its pages an entire record of itself. And either is, therefore, to this extent, separate from, and independent of, the other.

But in spite of the mutual independence which to this extent they exhibit, it is impossible to suppose that they are really independent of one another. Apart from the numerous internal evidences of dependence which they contain, we are faced by the extrinsic evidence of the fact that they have always clung to one another with a quite extraordinary persistence. At the end of two thousand years they exhibit not the slightest symptom of any tendency to dissociation. Their bond of union, whatever it may be, betrays no sign of disruption.

The persistency with which they thus continue to cling together is especially remarkable, because it might well have been expected that, in comparison with the more modern doctrines of Christianity, the comparatively antiquated precepts of Judaism must have long since passed into disuse. It is not as if the

New Testament were a later chapter in the Jewish code. On the contrary, Christianity professes to be a totally new revelation. Admittedly the later code is, in many respects, a departure from, and, in every respect where they differ, an improvement upon, the old.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in spite of all this, the novel Religion still adheres to the old with a tenacity which seems almost to betray a consciousness that dissociation would mean destruction. In spite of all its originality of thought and conception Christianity, at the end of the two thousand years of its existence, still exhibits an almost parasitic adhesion to its great forerunner.

It is, moreover, to be observed that this persistent association emanates solely from the New Testament to the Old. Judaism still professes to-day, as it has always professed, an entire independence of Christianity. It is not from any conscious urbanity or amenity on the part of Jewish divines that the Jewish Scriptures are so persistently printed and bound in the same volume with the New Testament, or that the Jewish law and the prophets are read Sunday after Sunday to thousands of Christian congregations. The Jews themselves have always displayed, not merely an indifference, but a violent repugnance, to the Christian code. The force, therefore, which has bound the two codes together in an everlasting fellowship is primarily an emanation from the side of Christianity alone. The dependence which it exhibits is primarily not a mutual dependence. Christianity betrays a consciousness of dependence upon Judaism which is by no means reciprocated by Judaism towards Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> *E.g.* Matt. v. 21-22: 'Ye have heard that it was said by (or, to) them of old time, Thou shalt not kill. . . . But I say unto you, That every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.'

The student of philosophy who has learnt to appreciate at its true worth the principle of cause and effect will detect in this persistent union between the two Testaments evidence of some great underlying fact. The tendency of time is usually to disrupt. And resistance to disruption, even in circumstances favourable to adhesion, is invariably difficult, and generally brief. There must, therefore, be some force of unusual potency at work between the two codes to have thus warded off for two thousand years a disunion favoured, as we have seen, by the various disruptive influences to which the union has been exposed. And this force must be nothing less than a powerful natural connection between the two, deeply ingrained in the constitutions of both. In order to understand the nature and cause of this remarkable adhesion, it is necessary to glance briefly at one or two of the principal factors in what we may, perhaps, call the Natural History of Religion.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NATURAL HISTORY OF RELIGION

EVERY student of the phenomena which together constitute Religion, must sooner or later find himself faced by the question of the origin of those phenomena. How came Religion into existence at all? What was it that originated the religious idea? Religion and Science are both agreed that 'no man hath seen God at any time.' How, then, can man ever have risen to so strange a conception as that of the existence of an unseen God?

Until within the last fifty or sixty years Religion found but little difficulty in giving an answer to this question. The religious idea, we were told, was simply a divinely imparted revelation. The conception of God and the disclosure of His will were the products of a supernatural inspiration. And thus Religion came to us as a direct messenger from heaven, clothed in all the brightness and splendour of a falling star—a sort of Mulciber, dropped from the skies. For countless generations this supernatural explanation of the unique problem of the origination of religious ideas was accepted without question or demur. In a matter on which inquiry was prohibited as impious, men were content, or constrained, to believe what they were told. And the votaries of Religion regarded the object of their worship with very much of that blind and



unquestioning adoration which impelled the temple-haunting Ephesians to shout for two hours before their world-famed image of Diana, which, as all the world knew, had fallen down from Jupiter.<sup>1</sup>

But the growth of knowledge and the extension of inquiry have, in these latter days, rudely dissipated these long-unquestioned notions. Here, as elsewhere, the unchallenged supremacy of authority is beginning to show signs of giving way before the encroachments of reason. The scientific researches of the last half century have proved to conclusion that there are in existence, and have been for long ages past, a whole host of religious conceptions so utterly degraded and low, and so degrading to those who hold them, that it is simply impossible to conceive that they are in any sense directly heaven-derived—unless, indeed, we are to suppose that, like Mulciber, they were

‘thrown by angry Jove  
Sheer o’er the crystal battlements,’<sup>2</sup>

with the express purpose that they should be a curse, instead of a blessing, to mankind :

‘Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum !’<sup>3</sup>

Further than this, modern science has succeeded in showing that these degraded and degrading religious beliefs, when scientifically examined and analysed, betray, beneath the hideous grotesqueness by which they are deformed, so strong a family likeness to corresponding beliefs of modern Christianity, that it is difficult to believe that the two can have emanated from two wholly different sources.

In order to show how amazingly close is this family

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 34, 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Paradise Lost*, i. 741, 742.

<sup>3</sup> Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, i. 102.

relationship between Christian and sub-Christian beliefs, let us take, as an illustration, the very central idea which underlies every religion that has ever been found in any corner of the globe. All psychologists, including Herbert Spencer, Huxley, Lord Avebury, and the rest, are practically agreed that, regarded from the strictly scientific point of view, the origin of all religion is to be found in Ancestor-worship. In the words of Herbert Spencer, 'the rudimentary form of all religion is the propitiation of dead ancestors, who are supposed to be still existing, and to be capable of working good or evil to their descendants.'<sup>1</sup> Thus, according to Science, the central and underlying idea of all Religion is the belief that the worshipper stands *in the relation of a son to the object of his worship, who can confer upon him or withhold from him, as he chooses, either good gifts or evil visitations.*

With this fundamental doctrine of Paganism compare the corresponding doctrine of Christianity as to the relation—or rather, relationship—of man to God, as declared by Christ Himself, in one of the sublimest of His utterances:—

'After this manner pray ye: *Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread. And . . . deliver us from evil.*'<sup>2</sup>

It is impossible to compare together these two religious ideas without realising that one root-idea is common to both. There is, it is true, the important difference between the two concepts that, whereas the 'father,' to whom the Ancestor-worshipper prays, is thought of as identical with one who was once, in the

<sup>1</sup> *Essays, Scientific, Political and Speculative* (Library Edition, 1891), vol. i. p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 9-13.

natural and physical sense of the word, the father or forefather of the worshipper, this idea is absent from the Christian belief. But in both cases there are these strangely close points of identity:—in either case the worship of an invisible, bodiless, spiritual Being; in either case the relationship of Father and son; and in either case the immediate purpose of the worship is to obtain the granting of good and the withholding of evil.

What, then, are we to say? For are we not here in the presence of a dilemma? The more closely we examine the problem before us, and the more vividly we realise the closeness of the similarity between the two concepts, the more unavoidable does the dilemma appear. We are accustomed to regard Christian beliefs as heaven-inspired, and pagan concepts as devil-born. But is it possible to maintain any longer such a distinction in the case now before us? Assuming that the Christian belief represents unadulterated truth, can it be said that the almost identical pagan concept is a tissue of untruths? And if both concepts are true, in so far as they agree, is it conceivable that they can have originated from two totally different sources?—that there is no family relationship between the two? Are we not rather forced to the conclusion that the higher Christian belief is but a sublimated modification of the pagan concept—an offshoot engrafted on to a common stock, and deriving its nourishment from a common root, and through a common stem?

But if this conclusion is fairly forced upon us by the premises, what are we to say as to the origin of this common religious idea? Only two alternatives seem, at first sight, possible. Either we must exalt the pagan concept, in respect of its origin, to the high level of the

Christian belief, and say that their common origin is to be found in a direct and divinely-imparted inspiration—a conclusion which neither Religion nor Science is at all likely to adopt. Or else we must degrade the Christian belief, as regards its origin, to the low level of the pagan concept, and say that the origin of either is to be sought and found in purely natural causes—a conclusion which, however agreeable to Science, would deprive Religion of the one hold which she has upon the affection and veneration of mankind.

Is there any way out of this dilemma—any third course which, while duly recognising the indisputable right of Science to trace, if she can, all pagan religious beliefs to purely natural causes, and the undoubted success with which she has so traced them, and which, while also duly recognising the close family-relationship which undeniably exists between pagan concepts and corresponding Christian beliefs, can, nevertheless, attribute to Christian beliefs that directly divine origin which is essential to the stability and permanence of the Christian Religion? And if such a third course can be found, can any considerations be adduced which render its adoption not merely optional but imperative? It will be found that affirmative answers must be given to both these questions.

As the first step in this inquiry, let us state, as briefly as possible, the origin to which, as every one knows, modern science has traced all religious ideas. This question is one of extraordinary interest. In the absence of revelation, one might well have supposed that Religion would be, and remain, an unknown quantity. What natural cause, then, can have given rise to so strange an idea as the conception of the Supernatural? This cause Science traces to the



phenomena of dreams. The steps are, very shortly, as follows.

The savage, sleeping in his hut, dreams that he goes out hunting. He passes through a series of adventures, which, on waking, he recounts to his companions. Having but an imperfect conception in his own mind of the distinction between appearance and reality, and speaking a language which could but imperfectly express that distinction, he naturally conveys to his hearers the impression, which he himself holds, that he has actually been doing the things which he has dreamed. His companions, on the other hand, assure him that he has not left the hut; that whilst he was performing, as he and they believe, the hunting adventures which he recounts, he was all the time quietly lying in his wigwam.

What conclusion can he deduce from these premises? Obviously, he will conclude that he is a dual being, consisting of two parts; the one, his bodily part, which lay quietly in his hut; the other, a spiritual part, which, leaving his body, went out, on its own account, to perform the hunting exploits of which he dreamed.

From the phenomenon of sleep, in which the spirit leaves the body for a short time, invariably returning to the body on awaking, the savage naturally passes, through the phenomena of fainting and catalepsy (in which the spirit is absent for a longer period, and returns with greater difficulty), to the phenomenon of death, in which the spirit permanently absents itself; though the savage continues to expect that it may at any time return, just as it did in the cases of sleep and fainting. And thus arose the conception that man is a dual being—possessing a body, which is unable to

move when the spirit is away, as in sleep, or fainting, or death; and a spirit, which inhabits the body in its waking hours, but which leaves it in sleep or in death, and which is known to return in the case of sleep, and which is expected to return sometime in the case of death.

From the conception, thus induced, of the dual constitution of man, arose the practice of Ancestor-worship. The spirit of the dead chief, who had been feared in his lifetime, is conceived to be still in existence, constantly revisiting the scenes of his former achievements. He is still powerful to help or to harm; and he must, therefore, be propitiated, as in his lifetime, by prayers, by worship, and by gifts.

Now, it cannot be doubted that Science has here hit upon the truth. This scientific theory of the natural origin of Religion is supported by such an enormous mass of confirmatory evidence that no one can seriously call it in question. And if so, we are forced to the conclusion that pagan religious ideas, to which the Christian religion is related, as we have just seen, by ties of the closest family relationship, have derived their origin, not from a divinely-imparted revelation, but from the most simple and natural causes in the world.

Does not the establishment of this theory strike a death-blow to all claims on the part of Christianity to our credence? If all religious ideas have originated from a false conclusion, deduced from misleading premises; and if Christianity is but the highly-evolved descendant of that false conclusion; what becomes of its claim to the possession of a supernatural sanction? How can we claim for Christianity the authority of a divine inspiration, if Christianity itself is but a

creature of Evolution, vitiated by the stain of a tainted pedigree?

In seeking an answer to this question we must always bear in mind that modern philosophic research has conclusively established the fact that the various branches of the universe known to us are found to be governed by one set of laws. We find the same laws at work in the psychical sphere as those which govern the physical; and, in obedience to those laws, psychical phenomena have followed lines of development which are found to run parallel with those followed by physical phenomena. Hence, in studying any psychical phenomenon, we shall often do well to turn aside to consider some corresponding physical phenomenon. For the latter will frequently throw a flood of light upon the psychical phenomenon which we are seeking to interpret.

Applying this method of investigation to the psychical phenomenon which we call Religion, we shall find that, if we desire to decipher the origin and past development of this phenomenon, we cannot do better than commence our inquiry by investigating the origin and past history of man. For if, as scientists have not infrequently maintained, Religion is merely a natural product of human thought, it is more than likely that in respect of origin and development Religion will have followed lines parallel to those along which the origin and development of man himself are to be traced. The various stages in the history of the thinker will almost certainly have some relation to the corresponding stages of his thought. Let us, then, commence our inquiry as to the status of Religion, and the true relationship of Christian to pagan beliefs, by placing before ourselves once again, in outlines as brief as

possible, a few of the principal facts relating to the origin and evolution of man.

Upon this subject there are two, and only two, accounts that require consideration here. The one is that formulated by Science; the other, that which is propounded by Religion, and which is to be found in the first two chapters of Genesis. These two accounts of the origin of man, and the complete harmony which exists between them, have been so fully discussed in the author's *Conflict of Truth*, that it will be unnecessary here to do more than state in barest outline the conclusions there established, referring the reader to that work for the considerations and arguments by which those conclusions are supported. The following, then, is a brief statement of the joint account given by Science and Religion of the origin of the human race.

Starting from the point at which inorganic matter was already in existence, it will be observed that this inorganic matter, which was originally in a nebular condition of intense heat, was destined to supply the raw material out of which the material forms of the future members of the two organic kingdoms of plants and animals were to be formed. The first stage in the process of that formation consisted of an age-long period of development, during which, under the slow but certain operation of the natural law of evolution, this nebulous matter gradually, through loss of heat and the influence of gravitation and the other physical forces which were at work, assumed those differentiations and combinations of its constituents which rendered certain portions of it fit to be utilised as the receptacle of organic life. As soon as this point had been reached, vitality, by an act of *creation*, was instilled into some appropriate portion of this inor-



ganic matter ; and the lowliest forms of living organisms, such as are now illustrated by the humblest members of the vegetable kingdom, and perhaps also of the animal kingdom, sprang into existence.

Once more a long period of natural *evolution* ensued, during which these living beings were gradually fighting their way, step by step, up the ladder of development, until certain of them had attained to a sufficiently high standard of perfection to be fitted to receive the higher faculty of consciousness. When this stage had been attained, a second act of *creation* implanted in some appropriate organism the germ of this nobler form of life ; and thus there came into existence the first member of the animal kingdom, as distinct from the vegetable.

Once again a long period of natural *evolution*—as distinguished from creation—has supervened, during which the various members, which now constitute the animal kingdom, have been slowly developing by purely natural causes, until the development has reached its culminating point in that most wonderful and complex being known to Science as Man Intellectual—*Homo Sapiens*.

In this brief epitome of the joint account which Religion and Science thus give of the origin of the human race, it is important for our present purpose to observe and bear carefully in mind how different are the parts which have been played by creation, on the one hand, and evolution on the other, in the series of processes which have together culminated in the production of man. By creation is here meant the introduction of something which—or the germs of which—did not previously exist. By evolution, on the other hand, is meant the development, solely by

the operation of natural law (the nature and scope of which have been so admirably discussed and explained by Herbert Spencer in his *Synthetic Philosophy*), of materials which then already existed. The two processes are radically distinct. Creation is always unintelligible; evolution is, at all events up to a point, perfectly intelligible. Creation is supernatural; evolution is purely natural.

Now, it will have been observed that in this brief skeleton-history of man's origin there were two points at which creation made its appearance. And each of these points marked the introduction of a separate kingdom. The former of these two acts of creation introduced vitality, inaugurating the unconscious but living vegetable kingdom, and perhaps the lowest unconscious members of the animal kingdom. The latter introduced consciousness, inaugurating the conscious members of the animal kingdom. And thus the whole series of events consisted of a long chain of evolution, broken at two points by the interposition of two acts of creation. And man is, therefore, the joint product of evolution and creation. He is partly natural and partly divine.

Now, these things being so, in what relation does man stand to all the material phenomena which preceded his existence? Obviously, those of them which are in the direct line of his descent are in a certain sense his ancestors. Even lifeless matter shares in the honour of having taken part—indeed, a very important part—in his production. For it has provided the material for his physical frame—‘out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’<sup>1</sup> And thus he has inherited,

<sup>1</sup> Genesis iii. 19.

in his bodily form, the properties of inanimate matter.

He has inherited also the faculty of vitality, which was first introduced into the vegetable, or quasi-vegetable, kingdom by the former of the two acts of creation above mentioned. And he has inherited the faculty of consciousness, which was introduced by the second of the two creative acts. And so it will be seen that all preceding phenomena, both inorganic and organic, constitute a sort of natural framework, by means of which man was produced. In that framework, gradually developed in the course of ages by the purely natural law of evolution, but modified and redirected on each of two separate occasions by an appropriate act of creation, each of the three divisions of things has played its part in the building up of man. Only it must be remembered that as each of the two creative acts took place, it affected those members only which at that particular date had evolved up to the standard which was necessary in order to enable them to receive and transmit to their posterity the new faculty which was the product of that particular creative act. These more highly-favoured members and their descendants, thenceforward, in obedience to the impulse engendered by that creative act, started off on fresh lines of development, leaving behind them the other less highly-favoured members to work out their own further development on the old lines, unaffected by the new impulse. And thus it has come to pass that supernatural creation and natural evolution have worked hand in hand in the production and development of the inanimate world and its living inhabitants. Evolution has throughout been always present, slowly and continuously modifying and

changing all created things along the lines of natural development. Creation, on the contrary, has made its appearance only occasionally and spasmodically, introducing on each occasion a new factor, and thereby giving a fresh impulse to evolution along new lines of development.<sup>1</sup>

And so throughout the ages the tardy wheels of evolution have rolled slowly round. Through endless variety of detail one great monotony of law has prevailed, varied only by the occasional interposition of the two creative acts. And thus by the joint operation of these two causes—evolution, on the one hand, and creation, on the other—the three different orders of existence have come to be radically distinguished from one another. Inanimate matter belongs to the first order; it is the eldest of all things, and constitutes the material basis upon which all subsequent development has been built. Unconscious vitality is of the second order, being a product of evolution *plus* the first of the two creative acts above mentioned. And conscious life, up to and including man intellectual, is of the third order, being the product of evolution *plus* both the two acts of creation which we have been discussing. It represents, at once, the latest and the highest stage in Nature.

In the light of these well-known facts, turn now to consider the question of the origin and status of Religion. There we find a series of phenomena precisely parallel to the history which we have just been

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that the still later creative act, by which the germ of spirituality was implanted in man physical (as fully explained in the author's *Conflict of Truth*), is omitted in the above enumeration. The reason for the omission is that, for the purposes of the ensuing argument, man physical, and not man spiritual, is the initial unit that has to be taken into account.



tracing of the origin of man. For Christianity stands towards all sub-Christian religions in exactly the same relationship as that in which man stands towards all subconscious beings. Christianity, as regards what we may perhaps call its material structure, was no new creation. It was, in this respect, no *creation* at all. It was simply the culminating product of the evolution of preceding sub-Christian ideas, just as man intellectual was the culminating product of the evolution of subconscious beings. But though Christianity is thus, and to this extent, a product of a purely natural evolution, it is also a product of a supernatural intervention, in exactly the same way as that in which man was a product of supernatural creation. For between Christianity and sub-Christian religions there is just the same gap as that which separates man from subconscious beings. No subconscious being could evolve into a conscious man without the intervention of the supernatural act of creation which introduced consciousness. And no sub-Christian religion could possibly evolve into Christianity without the intervention of a supernatural revelation introducing the revealed truths of the Christian Religion. Sub-Christian religions were perfectly capable of evolving, by the unaided processes of natural development, into noble, and even lofty, moral and religious systems. Witness the splendid structures of the highest pagan philosophies. But these systems could never develop on their own account into the spiritual life which vitalises the Christian code. Up to a point they could develop along the lines of natural evolution. But at that point they stopped. As compared with the Religion of Christ they were inanimate and dead. The life which vivifies Christianity was beyond their reach.

But it must not for a moment be supposed on this account that these sub-Christian beliefs played no part in the production of the Christian Religion. On the contrary, they performed the all-important task of supplying the material 'out of which it was taken.' What the 'dust of the ground' was to man, that was pagan superstition to Christianity. No sooner had the pagan religious concept sprung into existence than it, like all other phenomena, began to evolve. Under the omnipresent influence of natural evolution, religious ideas slowly but continuously changed and developed. Sometimes in one direction; sometimes in another;—often downwards; occasionally, though more seldom, upwards—out of the seething plasma of grotesque superstitions that which was best and nearest to the truth gradually shaped itself into a matrix fit for the reception of the germ of Christianity, until at last, in the fullness of time, the crucial stage was reached.

And then came to pass in the history of Religion an event so strange and wonderful that it would be incredible and past belief, were it not for another fact more strange and wonderful still—so much more wonderful that it renders the event not merely credible but undeniable. As soon as the requisite standard of evolution had been reached—as soon as the highest of the sub-Christian religions had evolved up to the required standard of proficiency, thereby indicating that the grade of evolution had been achieved at which human beings had become fitted to receive and appreciate those highest truths to which no evolution of natural ideas could ever attain—then, as on those earlier occasions in the history of the material universe, the Deity interfered with an act of direct intervention, and infused into this naturally-evolved structure of

religious ideas those spiritual truths which are the gift of a divine revelation.

Thus revelation is to Religion what creation is to man. Just as an act of divine creation lifted lifeless matter into living matter, and again, at a later date, lifted living matter into conscious matter; so an act of divine revelation lifted these lifeless sub-Christian concepts into the living truths of Christianity.

Are we asked to justify this assertion? Its justification is easy. For it rests upon that most wonderful fact of all, to which allusion was made just now. Hitherto we have been speaking of the history of the origin of Religion as if that history contained two stages only, the sub-Christian and the Christian. But though that method of unfolding the subject was the best for our immediate purpose, in order to present the argument in its least complex shape and reduced to its simplest terms, it was, in reality and for ulterior purposes, an imperfect method, because it presented but a fraction of the truth. For when we come to investigate a little more in detail the history of the origin of Religion, we are brought face to face with that most wonderful fact of all—that that history presents the selfsame stages as those which, as we have seen, appear in the history of the origin of man. And we further find that those stages are separated from one another by dividing lines of direct divine interposition, which also exactly correspond to the creative acts which we have just been tracing out in the history of man. Let us proceed to verify this assertion.

## CHAPTER V

### PLANT AND ANIMAL

TENNYSON has somewhere remarked that the finest poetry is often found, on analysis, to contain profundities and depths of meaning of which the poet himself was entirely unconscious at the time when he penned the words. Of the numerous instances which might be adduced in support of this proposition the following may here be cited.

When the great dramatist put into the mouth of Ulysses the sentiment—

‘One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin,’<sup>1</sup>

he was attributing to his hero an aphorism of which it may be confidently declared that neither Ulysses, nor the poet himself, could possibly have been aware of one hundredth part of the truth which these noble words contain. Indeed, it is only within the last fifty years that Science has begun to disclose their wonderful depth of meaning. For it is only within that period that Science has begun to realise how close is the kinship which exists among all things in Nature. The obedience to natural law, which is now recognised as a universal charac-

<sup>1</sup> *Troilus and Cressida*, act iii. sc. 3.



teristic of all phenomena, imports, as a necessary corollary, that all things are related to one another by the ties of a common ancestry. Everywhere throughout the universe a family likeness, due to family relationship, is traceable among all phenomena. And almost every scientific or philosophic discovery of the last half-century does but preach another sermon upon this all-embracing and inexhaustible text.

To take a recent and well-known discovery made in the physical universe within the last few years, it is a familiar fact that, on the now accepted electrical theory of matter, an atom consists of corpuscles which are in a state of rapid rotation around the centre of the atom, and which are separated from one another by inter-corpuscular spaces which bear something like the same relations to the sizes of the corpuscles as those which the inter-planetary spaces in our solar system bear to the planets which revolve around the Sun. Thus a chemical atom—the diameter of which is about one fifty-millionth of an inch, while the diameters of the corpuscles of which it is composed are not more than one hundred-thousandth of the diameter of the atom—is constructed on the selfsame lines as those on which our solar system is built. In respect both of the parts of which it is composed, of the relative spaces by which those parts are separated from one another, and of the movements by which the parts are actuated—alike in respect of its structure and of its constitution—an atom is comparable to the cluster of planetary bodies which circle round the Sun. It is a working model, on an infinitesimal scale, of our solar system.

But the family likeness, which is thus discernible

among different parts of the universe, is by no means confined to phenomena belonging to the same order of existence, such as the material solar system, on the one hand, and a material atom, on the other. It is found also to exist among phenomena belonging to totally different orders. As an illustration in support of this proposition, compare together the evolution of Matter and the evolution of Mind—a physical phenomenon and a psychical phenomenon. In both of these two cases the ideas which for ages had prevailed among mankind have been recently shown by Science to be quite erroneous; and in both cases the real facts, as revealed by modern science, are exactly homologous to one another. As regards the evolution of Matter, it was for centuries supposed that the world had always been very much in the condition in which we find it to-day; that it had been manufactured in its present form by an external Agency. But within the last century scientific inquiry has annihilated this theory, and has proved conclusively that all worlds have assumed their present forms and conditions by the gradual operation of the interaction which is constantly taking place between the internal forces which they possess and the external forces by which they are environed. The modern view on this subject is admirably summarised by the late Professor Drummond:—‘God’s way of making worlds is to make them make themselves.’

In precisely the same way, in the case of the evolution of Mind it was until recently believed that the best—in fact, almost the only—way of teaching the young was to inject into their minds knowledge from without. The teacher taught by telling his pupils all that he wished them to learn. Their part in the

operation was purely receptive. It was his to give; theirs to receive. His endeavour was to manufacture their minds from without; not to stimulate them to grow from within.

Modern scientific research has, however, conclusively shown that this method is diametrically opposed to the method by which Nature teaches both the lower animals and man himself; and by so doing, has totally transformed our ideas upon the subject. However widely we may disagree upon such details as what are the best subjects to be taught, or what is the best order of sequence in which they should be studied, all who have examined the question scientifically are absolutely agreed that the old-fashioned method of instilling instruction is radically unsound. It is a violation of the law of evolution; for it is an attempt to substitute manufacture for growth. The thing to be aimed at, if we would adopt the only method of mind-development which bears the impress of Nature's approval, is not to inject ready-made knowledge from without, but to stimulate the pupil's internal appetite for inquiry—to excite his curiosity by only partially gratifying it, and so to lead him on to learn for himself by investigating things on his own account.

And thus these two phenomena, belonging to two totally different orders of things, fall into a harmony which betrays their intrinsic relationship to one another. Just as God's way of making worlds is to make them make themselves, so God's way of making Mind is to teach His creatures to teach themselves.

Accepting, then, this indisputable fact, that there is a family relationship among all phenomena, and

realising that this relationship extends to every corner of the Universe, embracing phenomena belonging to totally different orders of existence, we at once see that an interpretation of any phenomenon which brings it into harmony with other phenomena possesses a certain guarantee of probability. Other things being equal, it is more likely that such an interpretation is sound than that it is unsound. For, reversing the dramatist's aphorism, it possesses that touch of kinship which proves it a true child of Nature. Let us, then, apply this test to the interpretation of Religion which we are seeking to establish. Let us see how far an analysis of the factors which have taken part in the origination of Religion will bring those factors into harmony with the factors which have taken part in the evolution of man. We have already roughly sketched out the history of the origin of man in sufficient detail for our present purpose. All that will be necessary here will be to similarly sketch out the history of Religion and compare the two histories together.

In the first place it is to be noted that, just as there are three distinct stages in the history of the origin of physical man, namely, inorganic matter, living matter, and conscious matter; so also there are three distinct stages in the history of the origin of Religion, namely, first, pagan religions, originating in dreams and leading to Ancestor-worship; second, Judaism, being the Religion contained in the Old Testament; and third, Christianity, being the Religion of the New Testament. In order to assist us in stating the problem before us in the clearest and most vivid manner possible, it will be well to set out these three factors in tabular form, opposite to the



three corresponding factors in the history of man, thus:—

Factors of the Origin of Man.		Factors of the Origin of Religion.	
(Inorganic) .	Lifeless mineral kingdom	Paganism .	(Natural Religion)
	<i>Creation</i>	<i>Revelation</i>	
(Organic) {	Living vegetable kingdom	Judaism .	{ (Revealed Religion)
	<i>Creation</i>	<i>Revelation</i>	
	Conscious animal kingdom	Christianity .	

A glance at the above table will show that the human factors fall into two categories—the Inorganic and the Organic; whilst the factors of Religion similarly fall into two categories—Natural Religion and Revealed Religion; the ‘inorganic’ of Science corresponding to the ‘natural’ of Religion, and the ‘organic’ of Science corresponding to the ‘revealed’ of Religion. It will further be seen that the ‘organic’ of Science subdivides into two kingdoms—the vegetable and the animal; whilst the ‘revealed’ of Religion subdivides into the two Orders of Judaism and Christianity. So that the human factors eventually fall into three categories, connected with one another by two acts of divine creation, each of which creative acts introduced the later and higher kingdom; whilst similarly, the factors of Religion eventually fall into three categories, connected with one another by two acts of divine revelation, each of which acts of revelation introduced the later and higher Order of Religion.

Note next, in passing, the obvious fact that there is a correspondence between these two sets of factors in respect of the superiority which each successive factor exhibits over the factor immediately preceding it in the series. Living vegetable matter is obviously superior to lifeless mineral matter, because it *is* lifeless mineral matter *plus* something added, namely vitality. Conscious animal matter, again, is superior to vegetable matter, because it *is* vegetable matter *plus* something more, namely consciousness. And in just the same way, Judaism is superior to Paganism because, as will be more fully shown hereafter, it *is* Paganism refined by the addition of certain spiritual truths, into a higher and purer conception of Truth. And Christianity, again, is superior to Judaism because, as also will be more fully shown hereafter, it again *is* Judaism, still further refined by the addition of still sublimer spiritual truths.

It will be seen, therefore, that the two sets of factors, specified in the foregoing table, fall into harmony with one another in respect of the comparative superiority of each successive factor over its immediate predecessor in the series.

In the next place, observe once more that in either case each of the factors is connected with its immediate predecessor by a direct act of divine intervention—in the one case an act of creation, and in the other an act of revelation. The added truths which distinguish Judaism from Paganism are of such a nature that they could not be infused into Paganism except by a divine revelation. They belong to the order of truths which the Bible terms ‘unsearchable and past finding out,’<sup>1</sup> and which by their very

<sup>1</sup> Upon this subject the reader is referred to the author’s *Conflict of Truth*, pp. 417-420.

nature are beyond the reach of evolution. And similarly, the added truths which distinguish Christianity from Judaism are such as no natural evolution of Judaism could elaborate. They again are 'unsearchable,' and are dependent for their origination upon a supernatural revelation. Hence the interpretation here advocated of the origin of Religion exhibits an exact parallelism with the origin of man, not only in respect of the factors in either series and the comparative superiority of each successive factor over its predecessor, but also in respect of the supernatural interventions, by means of which, in each case, that superiority was produced.

Further, it must be borne in mind that, as regards these two supernatural acts of divine intervention, which we have distinguished by the names 'creation' and 'revelation,' the exactness of the homology which we are tracing is immensely emphasised by the fact that, though we have called them by two different names, they are in reality not two different kinds of act, but one and the same act. The distinction between them is not in respect of the act, but in respect of the result of that act; and that difference of result is due solely to the circumstance of the act operating upon different materials. The act of divine productivity operating in the material plane results in creation. The same act operating in the psychical plane results in revelation. And thus the connecting links between the three categories of existence in either plane are products, not of merely homologous, but of actually identical, acts of divine intervention.

When from these general homologies we turn to a more detailed examination of the factors contained in the above tabulated statement, we find further paral-

lelisms of extraordinary exactitude. That Paganism bears the same relation to Judaism that the mineral kingdom bears to the vegetable kingdom, is a fact which has already been stated and which will be more fully illustrated in a later chapter.<sup>1</sup> Here it is sufficient to mention that in either case, as we have seen, the lower factor differs from the higher in that it is wanting in that added vitality which has been introduced into the higher factor by an act of direct divine intervention. In either case the lower factor furnishes the material out of which the higher factor has been made, by the infusion of the new quality. We may, therefore, at once proceed to the examination of the more important problem presented by the two higher factors in each of the two series.

And here we have abundant evidence in support of our interpretation of the facts which constitute the pedigree of Religion. For the reality of the homology which exists between the Jewish Religion and vegetable life, on the one hand, and Christianity and animal life, on the other, is verified by almost every test that can be applied. Accepting the Spencerian doctrine that life consists of the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations, and varies in quantity in the case of each individual organism according as the environment in which these adjustments or correspondences are made is wide or narrow, we must admit that the main distinction between the vegetable and the animal is that the latter is far *more living* than the former. Both possess vitality; but the animal enjoys an increment of life, as compared with that possessed by the vegetable. The correspondences with environment which the animal exhibits are immeasur-

<sup>1</sup> Chapter viii, *post*.



ably wider, more numerous and more subtle than those which members of the vegetable kingdom are capable of establishing with their environment. The former enjoy an abundance of life which is denied to the latter. Vegetable organisms live; animal organisms *live more abundantly*.

And this is just the essential distinction which Christ Himself draws between Judaism and Christianity. In one of the most momentous of His utterances He declares, in exact terms, that this increment of vitality was precisely the gift which He came to impart, and the possession of which was to constitute *the* distinction which should sever, for all time, His new Religion from the old. 'I am come,' He said, 'that they might have life, and that they might *have it more abundantly*.'<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed that this utterance by no means denies the existence of life in the Jewish Religion. On the contrary, the words 'and that they might have it more abundantly' assert, by necessary implication, that religious life, in the real sense of the word 'life,' already existed in the Jews, of whom the words were spoken. The point of the utterance is that to the real life, which then already existed, a new and more abundant life was to be added—not in substitution for the old but in addition to it. And that Christianity is a completion of, and not a substitution for, the Religion of the Old Testament, is still further attested by Christ's well-known words, already cited:—'Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John x. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 17, 18.

‘Till all things be accomplished’ (ἕως ἂν πάντα γένηται). What is meant by this ‘accomplishment of all things,’ but the attainment, by means of the law of evolution, revived and redirected by Christ, of that highest spiritual life which His new revelation placed within the future reach of humanity, and which was to be built up, not of the new truths which He came to impart, but by the infusion of those new truths into the old truths contained in ‘the law and the prophets,’ which He came ‘not to destroy but to fulfil’? Having given by His new revelation a new impulse and a new direction to the evolutionary potentialities contained within the ancient ‘law,’ Christ left it to Nature to work out by the purely natural process of evolution this final ‘accomplishment’—a work so gigantic that it will require for its fulfilment all that remains of time (‘till heaven and earth pass away’); so final that its fulfilment will constitute the ‘accomplishment of all things’ by the establishment of ‘a new heaven and a new earth.’<sup>1</sup>

See here, then, the exactness of the parallelism which we are tracing. As in the physical sphere, so in the psychical. The act of creation by which, in the physical world, the new life of consciousness was introduced into a kingdom which already possessed the unconscious vitality of plant life, by no means abolished that old life. It introduced a new and ‘more abundant’ life, by way, not of substitution, but of addition. It, too, came ‘not to destroy but to fulfil.’ Investing the old life with a new and quickening impulse, it introduced a fresh impetus and a fresh direction to evolution, which will cease to operate only when all things shall have been accomplished,

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xxi. 1.

and when heaven and earth shall have passed away.

If we now turn to consider the exact mode in which in either case this new factor was introduced, we meet still further points of identity. It is in the highest degree probable—in fact it is practically certain—that the new life of consciousness was, in its inception, imparted to some member or members of the vegetable kingdom. This conclusion is almost forced upon us, not only by the apparent necessities of the case, but also by the fact that some of the lowest known forms of animal life, even at the present day, after having had the benefit of being subjected during immeasurable ages to the elevating influences of evolution, still exhibit so many of the characteristics of the vegetable kingdom, that it is obvious that they are related to vegetable organisms by the closest ties of affinity. Indeed, in the case of many of these humble organisms it is a moot question to which of the two kingdoms they belong. In view of these facts it is impossible to suppose that the first animal was a totally new organism, manufactured quite independently of the already existing vegetable organisms. The method adopted seems almost necessarily to have been that the germ of animal life was by an act of divine creation injected, as it were, into some vegetable or quasi-vegetable organism, and then left to develop its own inherent potentialities by the natural processes of evolution. And in just the same way the first Christian was not a freshly-manufactured being, wholly independent of the already existing Jews. The method which was adopted for the inception of this new and 'more abundant' life was that by means of an act of divine revelation the germ of Christianity was infused into the

hearts and minds of certain Jews, specially selected for the purpose, and was then left to develop in them and their spiritual descendants by the natural processes of evolution. And thus Christianity was ingrafted on to Judaism by the infusion of a new and more abundant life into the old and less abundant life, in the very same manner as that in which consciousness was ingrafted on to unconscious vitality.

Further than this, it is to be observed in this connection that the family likenesses which the lowest forms of animal beings exhibit to vegetable organisms are likenesses, not to the most highly-evolved members of the vegetable kingdom, but to the lowliest. From which it follows that the members of the vegetable kingdom which were selected as the first recipients of animal life must have been organisms which ranked among the lowliest representatives of plant life. And similarly, the individuals who were chosen to be the first recipients of the living germ of Christianity were not the wise, or the wealthy, or the learned members of the nation, but the poor, the humble, and the despised. 'God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose.'<sup>1</sup> In the words of the poet,<sup>2</sup>

'Not to the noble, not to the strong,  
To the wealthy, or the wise,  
Is given a part in that angel song,  
That music of the skies.'

There is a 'touch of Nature' traceable in this strange preference of the foolish to the wise, of the weak to

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Hankinson.



the strong, of the base and the despised to the lofty and the noble, which, when read in connection with the other parallelisms which we are tracing, goes far to prove how really and truly the whole universe is kin. There was a scientific reason for this selection alike in the physical and in the psychical planes. A vegetable organism which had developed far along the lines of vegetable life, however highly it might have developed in that direction was in reality a less fit recipient for the new kind of life than a less highly-evolved organism. Like the plasticity of childhood, as contrasted with the rigidity of age, there is in undeveloped structures a potentiality for developing along new lines and in new directions which is wanting in more highly-evolved structures. This rule holds good in every kingdom. In the mineral kingdom the elemental substances are capable of entering into all sorts of combinations accordingly as circumstances may determine. The future of the humblest members of the inorganic world contains within it an inexhaustible fund of unknown possibilities. An atom of nitrogen may become almost anything. It may form part of the atmosphere, or of the earth; or it may enter into the composition of a plant, or may become a constituent of the human brain. But this characteristic of versatility is wanting in the higher mineral compounds, and diminishes proportionately as compounds of the higher grades are reached. And in the same way the humbler members of the vegetable kingdom possess a wider range of versatility for developmental purposes than the higher. Consequently, they constituted more plastic, and therefore more suitable, recipients of the higher life than the more highly-developed members of the kingdom.

The same law holds true also in the psychical plane. The imagination of a child possesses an unlimited range of plasticity. Like potter's clay it can be moulded into almost any shape, and is capable of assimilating the most divers ideas. But with advancing years the brain loses by degrees its original elasticity. Little by little its flights of fancy become less frequent and less extended. Its absorptive capacity becomes more and more confined to the few stereotyped lines of thought with which practice has made it familiar; until at last its capacity for evolving in any other direction comes to an end, and it ceases to assimilate any new ideas. So it is in the psychical sphere. And so is it also in the spiritual. 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God *as a little child*, he shall in no wise enter therein.'<sup>1</sup>

Yet once again. The vegetable kingdom is distinguished from the animal kingdom by the superior powers of motility possessed by the members of the latter kingdom over those enjoyed by the members of the former. Although members of the vegetal kingdom do possess a real, though feeble, motile power, the general characteristic of the kingdom, as a whole, as compared with the animal kingdom is that its members are sluggish and immotile. Whereas animals travel readily from one place to another with irrepressible activity, the vast majority of vegetable organisms are rooted to a single spot.

The same distinction is observable between Judaism and Christianity. No contrast between these two orders of Religion is more striking than the contrast between their respective powers of movement. Compare the utter absence of missionary enterprise

<sup>1</sup> Luke xviii. 17.

exhibited by the Jewish Religion with the spontaneous and irrepressible missionary activity which characterised Christianity from its very inception! Consider, to borrow the words of Lord Macaulay, 'the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte.'<sup>1</sup> This motility was of the very essence of the Christian Religion from the very first. Not only did Christ Himself, forsaking home and kindred, devote the years of His ministry almost exclusively to travelling from place to place teaching and preaching; not only was it an essential part of His practice to send forth 'apostles,'<sup>2</sup> who should similarly travel about, teaching and preaching; but His parting injunction to His disciples, the very last message which He gave them as His final bequest, was this:—'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to all creation.'<sup>3</sup> From that day to this, missionary enterprise, both at home and abroad, has been one of the most essential characteristics of the Christian Religion. In this respect the contrast between the respective motile powers of the vegetable and the animal kingdoms is not more marked than the contrast between the sluggish immotility of Judaism and the restless activity of Christianity.

The next point of correspondence to be noted is very curious and possesses a peculiar interest for the purposes of the ensuing argument, in that it exhibits in a special light the exact position in which the Jewish Religion stands in relation to the scheme of Christianity.

It is well known that the vegetable and animal kingdoms adopt two diametrically different methods in the use which they respectively make of the atmosphere.

<sup>1</sup> Macaulay's *Essays: Milton*, vol. i. p. 22 (1884 Edn.).

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 2, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 15.

Plants assimilate from the atmosphere, by way of food-stuff, carbon dioxide, and throw off free oxygen, thereby maintaining the power of the atmosphere to sustain animal life, which is absolutely dependent upon a supply of free oxygen and the elimination of the carbon dioxide from the animal economy. Animals, on the other hand, reject the carbon dioxide, but, for the purposes of respiration, absorb the oxygen. Both kingdoms, in fact, in their use of the atmosphere, perform parts which are mutually complementary to one another.

When from the physical we turn to the psychical sphere, we find in Religion a precisely parallel arrangement. The whole scheme of Religion is based upon a system of rewards and punishments. Stated in its extreme baldness, the scheme is found under ultimate analysis to amount to this, that obedience to certain principles will be followed by blessing; disobedience, by suffering.

These rewards and punishments which Religion thus holds out to mankind, are of two kinds—either rewards and punishments in this life, or rewards and punishments in a future life. And thus the whole atmosphere in which the religious life is lived consists of two distinct constituent parts—the one, the interests of this life; the other, the interests of the life to come.

Now, both these two constituents are equally real to Religion. Leaving out of consideration for the moment the question of their comparative values, and confining our attention to the question of their reality, we find that Religion recognises both alike. It is important to bear this point carefully in mind, because it is a point which is frequently overlooked. In our familiarity with the highest spiritual doctrines of



Christianity, we have become accustomed to think of Religion almost exclusively in relation to a future life. And thus we have come to overlook the fact that Religion is also enormously concerned with the interests and needs of our present existence.

Now, the point to be here noted is that Judaism and Christianity exercise, in respect of this atmosphere of Religion, functions which are mutually complementary to one another, and which exactly correspond to the two functions respectively performed by the vegetable and animal kingdoms in relation to the physical atmosphere. Just as the plant absorbs carbon dioxide and gives off oxygen, whilst the animal absorbs oxygen and exhales carbon dioxide, so Judaism, for the vital purposes of rewards and punishments, absorbs the interests of this life and disregards the interests of the future life, whilst Christianity absorbs the interests of the future life and ignores, and even rejects, the interests of the present life.

That this is so can easily be demonstrated. No one who reads the Old Testament with any care can fail to be struck by the fact that the rewards and punishments which are there propounded relate almost exclusively to this mundane existence. They are physical rewards and physical punishments. This proposition is so obviously true that it is perhaps scarcely necessary to cite specific illustrations in support of it; but the following instances, taken from the summary of blessings and curses with which the Hebrew Law concludes and which is evidently intended to be a more or less complete compendium of the rewards and punishments which the Jewish Religion had to offer, will serve to make the position clear:—

‘If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do

them, then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.’<sup>1</sup>

And similarly, the punishments which are threatened for disobedience to the divine commands are thus enumerated:—

‘But if ye will not hearken unto Me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant: I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you. . . . And I will break the pride of your power . . . and your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits. . . . I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your highways shall be desolate. . . . And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together in your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy. . . . Ye shall eat, and not be satisfied . . . and I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. . . . And I will bring the land into desolation . . . and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. . . . And upon them that are left alive of

<sup>1</sup> Lev, xxvi, 3-8,

you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.'<sup>1</sup>

It will be readily admitted that in this epitome, which is a brief summing up of the whole of the sanctions propounded by the Mosaic Religion, both the blessings offered and the denunciations threatened appeal solely—or, at all events, almost solely—to temporal interests. The obedient are to prosper and thrive, and the disobedient are to suffer and perish; but in either case the relation is to the concerns of this world. And it need scarcely be added that the historical portions of the Old Testament furnish a series of practical illustrations of this fundamental doctrine of the Jewish Code.

Christianity, on the other hand, absorbs from the religious atmosphere the interests of a future existence. The sanctions of Christianity are spiritual rewards and spiritual punishments. 'To behold the glory of Christ'; 'to be glorified with Christ'; 'to reign with Christ'; 'a crown of righteousness'; 'a crown of life'; 'inheritance with saints in light'; 'an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away'; 'eternal life'; 'a house eternal in the heavens'; 'to enter into the joy of the Lord'; 'the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus'; 'treasure in heaven': these are the prizes which Christianity offers to its votaries. And in the pursuit of these prizes Christianity is so exclusively absorbed, that it not only forgets, but actually rejects, the world and the world's desires: 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'<sup>2</sup> 'In the

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xxvi. 14-36.

<sup>2</sup> 1 John ii. 15.

world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.’<sup>1</sup>

In this connection it is to be observed that it is indeed true that Christ did, on one occasion at all events, promise His disciples, in terms, that His followers should be rewarded with temporal blessings. But His promise is expressed in such paradoxical language that it is difficult to believe that His words were not intended less as a promise than as a warning:—

‘There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My sake and the Gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, *with persecutions*; and in the world to come eternal life.’<sup>2</sup>

With persecutions! How strangely these sinister words, thus unexpectedly interposed among the promised rewards, must have jarred upon the expectant ears of the disciples. From the mundane point of view they seem to take back everything which the preceding words had promised. How little they were understood by the disciples themselves is attested by the significant fact that Luke, in recording the same conversation, omits them altogether:—

‘Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come eternal life.’<sup>3</sup>

It is almost impossible not to believe that Luke here misunderstood the Master’s paradoxical words. Perhaps Christ Himself intended that this ‘hard saying’ should be only partially understood by His

<sup>1</sup> John xvi. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Mark x, 29, 30.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xviii. 29, 30.



hearers at the moment. But, be this as it may, the interposed words 'with persecutions' seem to imply that the inheritance here promised is intended in that higher and spiritual sense in which Paul declares 'all things are yours, whether . . . the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours.'<sup>1</sup> And the plural 'mothers' significantly points to the same conclusion, indicating that the promise is to be fulfilled, not in the kingdom of this world, but in the 'kingdom of love'; for Nature, as has been finely remarked, gives us only one mother; but love, many.

The truth which we thus find ingrained in the structures of the Judaic and Christian Codes is confirmed extrinsically by the express authority of Christ Himself. 'Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.'<sup>2</sup> It will be observed that these words were spoken to the Jews. A few verses before, Christ had been speaking to the Pharisees. But here He is answering a question raised by the Jews, and it is to them that His words refer.

It will also be noticed that Christ is not drawing any distinction between one class of Jew and another. He is raising no question between Pharisee and Sadducee—between sect and sect. The contrast which He is emphasising is a contrast between the Jews and Himself—between 'Ye' and 'I'—between Judaism and Christianity. And this is the comparison. Judaism is from beneath; Christianity is from above: Judaism is of this world; Christianity is not of this world. And thus we have from Christ's own lips a direct confirmation of the distinction between Judaism and Christianity upon which we have been insisting in the fore-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.

<sup>2</sup> John viii. 23.

going pages,—that Judaism busies itself with the affairs of this world, while Christianity is concerned with the things of the world to come.

That this is the meaning of Christ's words is proved by the words which immediately follow:—‘I said therefore unto you that ye shall die in your sins. For if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.’ These words make it clear that Christ is reproving the Jews, to whom He is speaking, not on the ground that their acceptance of the Judaic Code was imperfect, or that their practice of its precepts was defective, but solely on the ground that they were rejecting Christianity—‘ye believe not that I am He.’ His argument is this. The life which Christianity is now offering you is a life which survives the grave, extending into another world. Such a life cannot be conferred by Judaism, because Judaism is ‘of this world.’ If, therefore, you reject Christianity, you will die.

Before we leave this branch of the homology which we are tracing, one little point of identity is not undeserving of attention, as illustrating the wonderful completeness of the homology. It will have been noticed that the injunction, ‘Love not the world,’ is immediately followed by the explanatory words ‘if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.’ These last words supply the reason for the injunction. The love of the world is fatal to the love of the Father.

Bearing this fact in mind, recall now what was said, a few pages back, as to the relation of the atmosphere to animal life. We there saw that ‘animal life is absolutely dependent upon a supply of free oxygen *and the elimination of the carbon dioxide from the animal economy.*’ In other words the carbon dioxide, which is life to the

plant, is poison to the animal. The two cannot reside together. Unless the animal organism can eliminate from its system the carbon dioxide, the animal life cannot remain in it. And what is this but a prophetic echo of the parallel truth in the spiritual plane? What the carbon dioxide is to animal life, that is the love of the world to the Christian life. The love of the world and the love of the Father cannot subsist together. The one must necessarily expel the other. 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. *If any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him.*'

Thus we find that, as in the two organic kingdoms of the physical world, so in the religious sphere, the two branches of Revealed Religion perform opposite and complementary functions. From the aggregate of human interests, which constitute the atmosphere in which Religion lives, the lower Judaic Religion assimilates the temporal and disregards the eternal; while the higher Religion of Christ absorbs the Hereafter, and ignores—and even rejects—the Now.

The parallelism now under consideration extends to still further details. It will have been observed that, in pointing out the attitude of Judaism towards the atmosphere of Religion, we stated that Judaism, for the purpose of rewards and punishments, absorbs the interests of the present life and disregards the concerns of the future life. That statement was sufficiently accurate for the immediate purpose for which it was made. But if we examine it more particularly, we find that it is not a complete statement of the facts. It expresses a part, but not the whole, of the truth. The exact fact is that, though Judaism *principally* regards the present life, it does also to

some, though a very much less, extent regard also the future life. A few occasional references to future rewards and punishments are to be found scattered here and there through the Old Testament :—

‘At that time Thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.’<sup>1</sup>

‘I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the Earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet without my flesh shall I see God.’<sup>2</sup>

‘But as for me, I will behold Thy presence in righteousness: and when I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it.’<sup>3</sup>

And the argument in support of the doctrine of a future life which Christ deduced from the words of Exodus, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,’<sup>4</sup> will occur to every one.<sup>5</sup>

But though these occasional references to that higher spiritual life which constitutes the very structure of Christianity are thus to be found also in the Old Testament, they do not form any structural part of Judaism. The references themselves to a future spiritual life are oblique rather than direct. How small a part they play in the Judaic Code is significantly attested by the fact that the Sadducees openly and persistently maintained that there is nothing in the Jewish Scriptures to warrant a belief in the doctrine of immortality. And although Christ showed that this contention was unsound, nevertheless its existence and the persistency with which it was asserted and maintained illustrate the fact that the references to immortality, which the Judaic Code

<sup>1</sup> Dan. xii. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Job xix. 25, R.V. (marginal rendering).

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xvii. 16 (Prayer-book Version).

<sup>4</sup> Ex. iii. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. xxii. 31, 32.



undoubtedly does contain, are both few and unobtrusive. They are not the truths of which Judaism is built up. The exact truth, therefore, is that Judaism is structurally *built up* of the interests of the present life, but *breathes*, though far less vigorously than Christianity breathes it, the spirit of the higher future life.

With this state of things the facts relating to plant life in the physiological sphere are precisely parallel. Plants make a twofold use of the atmosphere, the one for the purpose of assimilation; the other for the purpose of respiration. For the former of these two purposes they extract, as we have seen, carbon dioxide, rejecting the oxygen; but for the purpose of respiration they, like animals, absorb oxygen—though far less vigorously than animals absorb it. In other words, they feed on carbon dioxide, of which their tissues are built up; and they breathe a little oxygen. And thus the whole truth is that, taking these two processes together, plants extract from the atmosphere principally carbon dioxide, but also a little oxygen.

And thus it becomes clear that the homology under consideration extends even to this abstruse detail. Just as plants absorb from the atmosphere principally carbon dioxide, but also inhale—though comparatively feebly—a little oxygen, so Judaism absorbs principally the interests of the present life, but also breathes—though more feebly than Christianity breathes it—a little of the interests of the future life. It is built up of the interests of the present life, but respire (though faintly) the spirit of the future life.

We see, then, that Judaism and Christianity stand to one another in precisely the same relationship as that in which plant life stands to animal life. The

reality of this homology is proved by the fact that it is confirmed by every test that can be applied. It is seen in the constituent factors of which Religion is compounded, and in the progressive superiority of each factor over its immediate predecessor. It is seen in the fact that each factor is both attached to, and separated from, its predecessor by an act of divine intervention—in the one case an act of creation, in the other an act of revelation. It is traceable in the 'more abundant life' which distinguishes Christianity from Judaism, and in the lowliness of the individuals to whom this more abundant life was first imparted. It is illustrated by the superior powers of motility possessed by Christianity; and finally, by the highly remarkable fact that Judaism and Christianity perform complementary functions, which exactly correspond to homologous complementary functions performed by plant life and animal life in the economy of the physical universe. From all of which facts it follows that Judaism and Christianity, on the one hand, and plant and animal, on the other, are homologous factors. What the plant is to the animal in the physical world, that is Judaism to Christianity in the psychical sphere.

## CHAPTER VI

### RECAPITULATION AND FIRST CONCLUSION

HERE let us pause for a moment and review very briefly the ground which we have thus far traversed, in order to enable us to appreciate clearly the first conclusion to which the foregoing considerations necessarily give rise, and thence to map out the path which lies before us.

In the first chapter we observed the change which, during the last few years, has passed over the surface of public opinion with regard to the great Scientific-Religious controversy, and which, though doubtless only superficial, is nevertheless sufficiently widespread to have invaded every region of intellectual activity. We found that, so far as Religion is concerned, this change has had the effect of substituting a sullen Atheism, confessedly built upon a boasted ignorance, in place of the brilliant but shallow intellectual opposition by which the so-called agnostics of the nineteenth century attempted to undermine the status and influence of Religion. The pretended and passive ignorance of Agnosticism has given place to the real and aggressive ignorance of Atheism. In order to emphasise and explain this change of attitude on the part of the opponents of Religion we briefly examined the altered views which now prevail upon the question of the efficacy of prayer; and we saw how completely the modern scientific theory of directivity has re-

volutionised philosophic opinion on this important subject. Under the influence of this recently-established doctrine the belief in the efficacy of prayer has now been freed from every taint of irrationality; and a logical examination of the probabilities of the case shows conclusively that the belief is not merely permissible but imperative.

On proceeding to inquire how these changed conditions affect the conduct of the defence of Religion against the threatened attack of Atheism, we found that they necessitate a twofold method of procedure. In order to satisfy ourselves of the utter inability of even the most destructive forces of ignorance to overthrow the fabric of Religion, it is essential to demonstrate the indestructibility of Religion by proving, on strictly scientific lines, that the psychical materials of which Religion is built are at least as real and imperishable as the materials of which the physical Universe is composed—that in fact Religion possesses, in the psychical sphere, a status and a constitution which correspond to those which characterise our physical Earth and its inhabitants, both inorganic and organic. If these propositions can be established, the assault, so far as Religion is concerned, must fail.

But, unfortunately, to successfully establish the status of Religion on a permanent basis is not enough. For there still remain the interests of the votaries of Religion to be considered and safeguarded. For this purpose it is necessary to demonstrate, with all possible emphasis, not only that Religion is true, but also that the promises and threatenings of Religion are real and substantial. The programme of Religion must be stated not only in terms of truth and error, but also in terms of gain and loss.



In pursuance of this twofold project, we observed in the chapter on *The Problem of Life* that there is a school of thought and action to which Religion is the most practical thing in the world. To the sectaries of this denomination the one and only source of all energy and all activity in the conduct of life is supplied by the factor to which the Bible attaches such enormous importance under the name of Faith. And seeing that this Faith is found, under examination, to be an exact reproduction of the Faith so strenuously inculcated by the Old Testament; and further considering that there is a large class of religionists who are more than half inclined to abandon altogether the Old Testament, as having now grown obsolete and effete, and as having been practically superseded by the Religion of the New Testament; we found that the first question to be determined, in examining the anatomy of Truth, is the question of the status of the Old Testament in relation to the New. Undoubtedly, Christ's method of introducing His new Religion was to graft it on to the old. Why did He adopt this course in preference to planting a new and independent Religion of His own? Is there any scientific reason for what He did? And if so, what is that reason?

It will be observed that this is a purely scientific question, to be determined by strictly scientific considerations. And accordingly we set out in search of the required solution among purely natural phenomena. With this object we briefly examined the structure of Knowledge, and we found that the history of intellectual development resolves itself into two distinct stages, the earlier consisting of the *apprehension* of the existence of surrounding objects, and the later of the *comprehension* of the nature and character-

istics of those objects. Recognising this all-important distinction, we proceeded to inquire what is the essential difference between the two processes of apprehension and comprehension, and what is the organ the possession of which has enabled intellectual organisms to rise above the primordial and comparatively simple process of apprehension into the later, and higher, and infinitely more complex, process of comprehension.

Observing that the earlier stages of the latter of these two processes were reached at dates so immeasurably remote from the present time that all traces of them have necessarily been lost in mist and obscurity, we found, nevertheless, that Nature has not left us wholly without a clue to the mystery. On looking around amongst the natural phenomena by which we are surrounded for some connecting link between the present and the past, we found that the science of language can supply us with a thread, slender and frail but not untrustworthy, which may serve to guide our faltering steps through the maze of the forgotten past.

Feeling our way along this slender line of inquiry, and questioning the science of Philology as we went, we found in the terms 'apprehend' and 'comprehend' a true answer to our question. The difference which we sought is a difference of dimensions. To apprehend an object is to touch it in respect of one only of its dimensions; to comprehend it is to touch it in respect of two or more of its dimensions simultaneously. This is the message which antiquity has bequeathed to all time, enshrined and immortalised for us in the structure of language.

Following up this clue, we next observed that the

great principle thus disclosed to us by the science of Philology is a principle of universal application. Originally applied only to material objects—and to material objects small enough to be grasped in the hand—it nevertheless extends to all objects, material and immaterial alike, and thence to all groups of objects. To an atom, to a world, to a sidereal system, to the whole material universe; to a thought, to a scientific fact, to a religious doctrine, to the whole body of Science, to the whole system of Religion; to each and all of these the great principle applies. If we would ‘know’ them—if we would ‘know’ anything about them—we must study them in respect of at least two dimensions; we must examine them from at least two different standpoints; and having done this, we must fit together in our minds the different aspects thus separately regarded, so as to unify them into a single concept, before we can claim to comprehend them in any sense, or to any degree whatsoever. For every perception which we acquire, until it has been unified with another perception, belongs solely to the pristine order of apprehension. There must be a uniting of two or more ideas before comprehension is reached.

Turning next to inquire how far Religion recognises and provides for this principle, and confining, for the moment, our inquiry to Revealed Religion, as declared in the Jewish and Christian codes, we noticed that the Bible abundantly affords the materials requisite for the comprehension of Religion. In its primary division into the Old and New Testaments, and in the subdivision of each of these Testaments into its doctrinal and narrative portions, we found a presentation to our view of different aspects of

Religion, each of which may be apprehended separately, and all of which—if the Old and New Testaments are really two parts of one whole—may be unified together so as to induce a true comprehension of that whole.

Before, however, we can be sure that it is possible thus to unify the Old and New Testaments, we must satisfy ourselves that they are really two parts of a single whole, and not two separate and independent wholes. For the essence of comprehension lies in the unifying of two different aspects of one object. To bring together two aspects of two different objects will not lead to any comprehension of either. We therefore proceeded to inquire what are the real inter-relations of the Old and New Testaments.

And here we found that those relations are both complicated and curious. Both codes are independent wholes to the extent that either contains a complete record of itself. Yet, in spite of the mutual independence which to this extent they exhibit, it is impossible to suppose that they are really independent of each other. Apart from internal evidences of dependence, we are faced by the fact that they have persistently clung together for two thousand years, in spite of the circumstance that Christianity claims to be, and is, not a new chapter of the Jewish Code, but a totally new revelation; in spite also of the further fact that the precepts of Christianity, wherever they differ from those of Judaism, are invariably improvements upon the old.

We observed, further, that the dependence which thus binds the two Testaments together is not a mutual, but a one-sided, dependence. Christianity clings to Judaism; but Judaism by no means reciprocates the



desire for union. On the contrary, Judaism professes and exhibits an entire independence of Christianity. In order to obtain an explanation of these strangely conflicting phenomena, we proceeded to glance at a few of the principal factors in the Natural History of Religion.

With this object we turned to inquire into the origin of the religious concept. How came Religion into existence at all? What was it that originated the religious idea—the strange conception of an unseen God? Discarding the explanation, which until recently gained ready acceptance, that Religion is simply and solely the creature of a divine revelation, and recognising the undoubted fact that modern scientific research has conclusively proved the existence of a multitude of religious conceptions, so degraded and low that it is inconceivable that they can be in any direct sense heaven-derived; and yet recognising that some of these pagan concepts betray so strong a family relationship to corresponding Christian beliefs that it is impossible to believe that the two can have emanated from two wholly different sources, we found ourselves brought face to face with a dilemma. Either both sets of beliefs are, in respect of their origin, heaven-inspired—a conclusion which neither Science nor Religion will admit; or else, neither set of beliefs is heaven-inspired—a conclusion which, even if it were agreeable to Science, is absolutely repugnant to Religion. In the presence of this dilemma, we turned aside to see whether there might not be some middle course between the two alternatives presented by the dilemma, which, while duly recognising the facts upon which Religion and Science respectively insist, would at the same time satisfy the requirements of both.

In pursuit of this quest we first recalled the well-known fact that Science has succeeded in conclusively tracing the origin of the religious concept to dreams, which, by inducing the belief in a dual existence, gave rise to the idea of a spiritual entity distinct from the body, and of a future spiritual life distinct from this present bodily life, and which culminated in Ancestor-worship. And from this fact we saw that pagan religious ideas, to which, as we have seen, the Christian Religion is related by ties of the closest family relationship, have derived their origin, not from a supernatural revelation, but from causes which are purely natural.

We next turned to consider the question, which naturally arises from these conclusions, whether the establishment of the scientific theory of the natural origin of pagan religious notions does not strike a death-blow to all claims to our credence which Christianity may put forward on the ground of the possession of a supernatural origin. And observing that modern philosophical research has conclusively established the fact that the laws which govern psychical phenomena are the same laws as those which govern physical phenomena, and surmising that the past history of man is likely to furnish the required answer, inasmuch as it is highly probable that the origin and past history of thought are closely related to the origin and past history of the thinker, we proceeded to examine the joint account which Religion and Science give us of the origin and evolution of man.

And here we found that man is the product partly of natural evolution and partly of supernatural creation. His body is composed of lifeless, inorganic matter, into which, after it had, during an age-long period, evolved up to the required stage of complexity, vitality was in-

troduced by an act of supernatural creation. Thereafter another long period of natural evolution ensued, during which this living matter (which is now represented by the vegetable kingdom) was slowly evolving up to a still higher standard of evolutionary potentiality. When that standard had been reached, there occurred a second act of supernatural creation, by which was implanted the higher life of consciousness, which now constitutes the distinguishing characteristic of the members of the animal kingdom, of which man is the crowning representative.

Noting in this brief epitome of the history of man's origin the fundamental difference between the parts which the natural process of evolution and the supernatural process of creation have respectively played in that history, we examined the relation in which man stands to all the material phenomena which preceded his existence; and we found that those of them which are in the direct line of his descent are in a certain, and perfectly true, sense his ancestors. Even lifeless matter has played a part—by no means unimportant—in his production. 'Out of it was he taken.' And thus material phenomena constitute a kind of natural framework by means of which man has been produced. Gradually developed, in the course of the ages, by the purely natural process of evolution, but modified and redirected on each of two special occasions by the intervention of an appropriate act of supernatural creation, the three divisions of material things have played their respective parts in the building up of man. And thus evolution and creation—Nature and Supernature—have worked hand in hand. Man is the product, not of either of these two processes alone, but of both together. He is a combination

of a twofold process, the one natural, the other divine.

When we turned to apply these facts to the question of the origin and status of Religion, we there found a series of phenomena precisely parallel to those which we had been tracing in connection with the origin of man. For we found that Christianity stands to all sub-Christian religions in exactly the same relationship as that in which man stands towards all sub-human beings. Christianity is a product of the joint operation of two processes, the one natural and the other supernatural. When Science tells us that Christianity is an offshoot evolved from the beliefs of Paganism, Science is right. There is a sense, and a very real sense, in which it is true to say that Paganism is the ancestor of Christianity. For out of pagan beliefs Christian doctrines have been taken. But then we must remember that in the selfsame sense it is also true to say that inorganic matter is the ancestor of man. So it is; for out of it was he taken. But between this degraded ancestor of man and its glorified descendant came two interposing acts of divine intervention, which have transformed the descendant out of all recognisable likeness to his 'mother earth.' No one who sees a living, breathing, thinking human being could possibly have guessed his humble ancestry, if Religion and Science had not conspired together to divulge the mysterious secret.

And so, too, with Religion. Christian beliefs are products of a real evolution from the dust and ashes of pagan beliefs. Out of them was it taken. But, as in the case of man, so here; Christianity suffers no taint from this tainted pedigree. For between Paganism and Christianity are to be found interposing acts of



divine intervention which have swept away everything that is false, everything that is degraded or low, in Religion's ancestry. And thus, though under different names, divine intervention has played the same part in the history of Religion as that which divine intervention has played in the history of man. What creation is to man, that is revelation to Religion.

When, in the chapter on *Plant and Animal*, we proceeded to examine somewhat more in detail the part which revelation has thus played in the history of Religion, we noticed that the modern discovery, that phenomena which belong to different orders of existence are governed by one and the same set of laws, has added a new evidential value to the detection of homologies between any two phenomena. For from this discovery it follows that an interpretation of any phenomenon which brings it into harmony with other phenomena possesses a certain guarantee of probability. Other things being equal, it is more likely that such an interpretation is sound than that it is unsound.

In illustration of this principle we observed that the history of Religion resolves itself into two distinct stages, the one of which is called Natural Religion and the other Revealed Religion; and we found that these two stages exactly correspond to the two kingdoms, the Inorganic and the Organic, which constitute the factors from which the human race has emerged. And, further, by the subdivision of Revealed Religion into Judaism and Christianity, and of the Organic into plant and animal, the history of Religion, like the history of man, eventually divides itself into three distinct stages, which exactly correspond to the three stages in the history of physical man. Just as the human history is divisible into the three stages of

(1) inorganic matter, (2) living (but unconscious) matter, and (3) conscious matter, so the history of Religion is broken up into the three stages of (1) Paganism, (2) Judaism, and (3) Christianity. The exactness of the correspondence may be still further emphasised by being expressed in tabular form:—

1. Inorganic (a) Mineral.	1. Natural Religion (a) Paganism.
2. Organic { (b) Plant.	2. Revealed Religion { (b) Judaism.
{(c) Animal.	{(c) Christianity.

We saw, too, that in either case each stage is both joined to, and separated from, the immediately succeeding stage by an act of divine intervention—in the one case, an act of creation; in the other, an act of revelation. And we noted that creation and revelation are but two names for one act operating in two different planes of existence.

We observed, moreover, that in either case each succeeding stage is superior to its predecessor in respect of the additional quality which the immediately preceding act of divine intervention had introduced. And we noted that in all these respects the two series exhibit exact parallelisms to one another.

When from these general homologies we turned to a more detailed examination of the two sets of factors, we found further parallelisms of extraordinary exactness. Passing from the phenomena of Paganism, and examining the two higher factors of Judaism and Christianity, we discovered that the relations between Judaism and Christianity exactly correspond to the relations between plant and animal. We traced this correspondence in the fact that animal organisms are more living than plant organisms; and we noticed that

this is exactly the distinction which the Founder of Christianity drew between His new revelation and the old dispensation of Judaism:—‘I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’

We observed, too, that this new and more abundant life was, in either case, introduced, not in substitution for, but as an addition to, the old life which was already in existence; and we noticed that, in the case of Christianity, the fact that the new revelation was not designed to displace in any degree the older dispensation, is expressly emphasised by Christ's well-known words—‘Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.’ From which it follows that as Christianity was designed to ‘fulfil’ the law and the prophets, the continuance of the latter is a necessary part of the scheme of Christianity, just as the continuance of vegetable life is a necessary condition to the maintenance of animal life.

Turning next to consider the exact mode in which the ‘more abundant’ life of Christianity was introduced, we discovered further homologies. Just as animal life was originally infused, by an act of divine creation, not into a new organism specially created for the purpose of receiving the new life, but into an already existing vegetable, or quasi-vegetable, organism, and was then left to germinate and develop through the natural processes of evolution; so the germ of the new life of Christianity was injected, by an act of divine revelation, not into a specially manufactured recipient, but into the hearts and minds of certain

Jews, and then left to develop in them and in their spiritual descendants by the purely natural processes of evolution. And thus Christianity was ingrafted on to Judaism in the very same way as that in which, in the physical sphere, consciousness was ingrafted on to unconscious vitality.

Further than this we observed that the members of the vegetable kingdom which were selected as the first recipients of animal life must have been organisms which occupied a humble rank among the representatives of vegetable life; and, similarly, the individuals who were chosen to be the first recipients of the living germ of Christianity were not the wise, or the wealthy, or the noble members of the nation, but the poor, the humble, and the despised. And we noticed that this strange preference of the lower before the higher is based in either case upon a scientific necessity.

Once again, we traced the homology before us in the superior motility which Christianity has always exhibited as compared with the lesser motility which characterises Judaism; and we noted that the same difference in motility is also one of the distinguishing characteristics of animal, as distinguished from vegetable, life.

Descending then to still closer and more particular details, we discovered the highly singular circumstance that the strange distinction which is found to exist between the animal and vegetable kingdoms in respect of the uses which they respectively make of the atmosphere is reproduced in the psychical sphere. Whereas plants assimilate from the atmosphere carbon dioxide and throw off free oxygen, while animals, reversing the process, absorb oxygen and give off carbon dioxide, so an exactly similar distinction is traceable between



the methods of Judaism and those of Christianity. The scheme of Religion is based upon rewards and punishments. These rewards and punishments are of two kinds—rewards and punishments in this life, and rewards and punishments in a future life. These two sets of inducements together constitute the atmosphere in which Religion lives. And we found that while Judaism absorbs the interests of the present life and ignores the interests of the future life, Christianity, reversing the process, assimilates the interests of the future life, and disregards and even rejects those of our present existence. This proposition we supported by numerous quotations from the Old and New Testaments, showing that temporal blessings and temporal pains are the inducements to which Judaism appeals, while Christianity, on the other hand, ignoring and rejecting the interests of this present world, appeals principally to inducements which will find their fulfilment, not in this life, but in the life to come.

Pursuing still further this line of inquiry, we found that the homology in question receives additional confirmation from a curious exception which is to be found in both the physical and the psychical spheres. The general rule that plant life absorbs carbon dioxide and gives off oxygen is subject to a small exception. Plants make a twofold use of the atmosphere, the one for the purpose of assimilation, the other for the purpose of respiration. For the former of these two purposes they absorb, as we have seen, carbon dioxide, giving off oxygen; but for the latter purpose they absorb—though far less vigorously than animals absorb it—a little oxygen. And in exactly the same way Judaism, though principally absorbing the interests of the present life, is found to absorb also, though far less vigorously than

Christianity absorbs them, a little of the interests of the future life. Judaism is structurally built up of the interests of the present life, but breathes, though faintly, a little of the spirit of the future life.

And finally we noticed the very singular circumstance that the fact that the carbon dioxide which plant life absorbs from the atmosphere is fatal to animal life exactly reproduces itself in the startling announcement of Christianity, 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'

And thus we saw that Judaism and Christianity stand to one another in precisely the same relationship as that in which plant life stands to animal life. What the plant is to the animal in the physical world, that is Judaism to Christianity in the psychical sphere.

It will be seen that, if the foregoing conclusions are sound, we have succeeded in establishing the first of the two propositions foreshadowed in the opening chapter. If and so far as we have been able to identify the inter-relations of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity with those of Inorganic, Plant, and Animal, we have to that extent identified the anatomy, both structural and functional, of Religion with the anatomy of the material cosmos. And in so doing we have demonstrated the proposition that Religion is a psychical cosmos complete in itself, and anatomically homologous to the physical cosmos. The identification of the past history and the present structure of Religion with the history and structure of the material world and its inhabitants attests the fact that whatever measure of design, of reality, of stability, and of permanence attaches to the one order of existences must

be attributed to the other also. For both are constituent and homologous parts of the Universe.

Recognising these facts, we cannot fail to realise what an enormous accession of credibility Religion acquires from the comprehensive method of investigation. Indeed, it is not going too far to say that that method invests Religion with a totally new status in the scheme of existence. As long as we imagine the body of religious beliefs to be a more or less disconnected set of ideas, jumbled together without order or design, so long it is possible to contend that Religion is merely an artificial creation of the human brain, a product of purely human manufacture constructed out of the fanciful materials of human hopes and human fears. But the moment that an anatomical examination of the structure of Religion reveals the scientific fact that Religion is built on lines that are exactly parallel to the lines on which the physical cosmos is constructed; the moment that we succeed in detecting in the anatomy of Religion structures and functions which find their exact counterparts in corresponding structures and functions that are to be found in the anatomy of the material cosmos; at that moment we make a discovery which places Religion before us in a totally new light. For then is borne in upon us the impossibility of supposing that there has been anything accidental or imaginative in the origination and development of Religion. Then any theory of random causation becomes simply untenable. For then Religion stands revealed before us as a necessary and essential ingredient in the established order of things—a fixed and imperishable part of the permanent fabric of the Universe.

But it is not until we press this conclusion one stage

further still, that we realise to the full extent how impregnable is the position in which it has placed Religion. The homologies which we have been tracing between the cosmos of religious ideas and the cosmos of material phenomena prove an identity of causation. If it be true that Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity are really homologous, both structurally and functionally, to Inorganic, Plant, and Animal, then it follows that the Power which produced the one set of factors is responsible also for the production of the other. Whatever, therefore, we believe concerning the origination of the one set, we must believe of the other also. And this conclusion furnishes an almost unanswerable argument in favour of the divine origin of both. Standing apart, it may be difficult to prove the divinity of either. The physical factors, it may be contended, are self-evolved. The psychical factors, it may be argued, are of man's creation—imaginary creatures of human invention. But the identification of the origin of the two sets of factors precludes this argument. For as it is impossible to contend that the physical factors are man-made, inasmuch as they are obviously ultra-human in respect of their origin, it follows from the identification of the two that the causation of the psychical factors must be ultra-human also. But if religious beliefs are of ultra-human origin, then it is simply incredible that they can be untrue. Is it to be supposed that the Power which made man and which implanted in him certain beliefs of vital import, induced those beliefs merely for the purpose of misleading him? The question answers itself. No one with whose opinion we need concern ourselves will deny that if religious beliefs are of ultra-human origin they must be true. The identification, therefore, of



the causation of Religion with the causation of the physical cosmos establishes the truth of Religion. But if so, then it further follows that both sets of phenomena are of divine origin. On the one hand, Religion's own account of herself is and must be unimpeachable. There is the ring of genuine authority in her 'Thus saith the Lord.' And, on the other hand, physical phenomena must be exactly what Religion declares them to be. The grand old Judaic announcement, 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,' is now seen, more clearly than ever before, to be a message to which God Himself has set His seal.

Thus far we have, in pursuance of the first part of the programme sketched out in the opening chapter, been endeavouring to establish the proposition that Religion has nothing to fear from the threatened attack of modern Atheism. And we have, in support of this contention, endeavoured to show that a scientific examination of the past history and present structure of Religion reveals the fact that Religion is possessed of such a status in the anatomy of Truth as secures a measure of permanence and stability sufficient to ensure a complete immunity from even the most destructive forces that malignity and ignorance can set in motion. And it will have been observed that in discussing this first portion of our problem we have been employing the terminology of physical science. In tracing out the inter-relations of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity, and in showing that those inter-relations are identical with the inter-relations of Inorganic, Plant, and Animal, we have been expressing the inter-relations of the three Orders of Religion in terms of physics and physiology. We have now to direct our attention to the second and

more practical part of our problem, by demonstrating to the sceptic not only that the truths of Religion are both a theoretical verity and an actual reality, but also that he himself has something substantial to gain, and something material to lose, by obeying or neglecting the laws which Religion propounds. With this object we shall first inquire, on purely philosophic grounds, what we have to hope, and what to fear, from the cultivation or neglect of Religion. What difference does it make to each one of us whether he lives a religious or an irreligious life? And what is a 'religious life'? What, in fact, do we mean by 'Religion'? Having endeavoured to answer these questions, we will then proceed to inquire what is the part which each of the three great Orders of Religion has played in the building up of the anatomy of Truth, and what is the function which each of those Orders performs in relation to human life and human conduct.

We shall find that the inquiry now before us is both wider in its scope and more practical in its results than that which we have hitherto been pursuing. Up to the point which we have at present reached we have been applying the comprehensive method of investigation to the comparatively narrow issue of the comparative anatomy of Religion and Science. We have been comparing the structure and functions of Religion with the structure and functions of Science. We have now to extend our inquiry to the wider investigation of the anatomy of Truth as a whole, by comparing the doctrines of Religion not only with the truths of Science, but also with the wider truths of Philosophy. And we shall discover that this more extended inquiry involves the whole question of the practical application to our lives and actions of the laws and principles

of Religion, until it eventually conducts us to a philosophic solution of the ultimate problem of Religion—What is ‘eternity’? and What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

First, then, by way of initiating this second portion of our inquiry, let us consider, on purely philosophic grounds, what we have to hope and what to fear from the cultivation or neglect of Religion; and what difference it makes to a man whether or no he moulds his life on the model which Religion prescribes under the name of ‘godly’; and what exactly is the distinction which Religion draws between a godly, and an ungodly, life.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE GREAT DILEMMA

IN relation to Religion, using that term in the sense which is intended when we speak of Monotheistic Religion, two, and only two, alternative theories of life are logically tenable. When once we have conceived the idea of the possibility of the existence of One Only God, such as He is portrayed for us in the Judaic Code, we are thereupon instantly and inexorably confronted by a choice between two rival hypotheses, one or other of which must be right, and either of which is absolutely destructive of the other. We are speaking now, not of any theological dogma or religious doctrine, but of purely scientific logic. The choice to which we refer is a choice from which there is no escape. It is forced upon us by the necessities of reason. Let us see what these two rival theories are.

The one maintains that the God Who made the world and all that the world contains, takes an active interest in every detail of our lives. According to this view, all our concerns are objects of His constant and immediate care. As nothing is too great for His power, so nothing is too small for His attention. Every action, every word, nay, every thought, is watched and scrutinised by Him. There is not a thought in our hearts but He knoweth it altogether. Every event that befalls us comes direct from His hand; is part of the training to



which He is subjecting us ; is a landmark in the plan of life which He has mapped out for us. He is constantly beside us, every moment of our lives, guiding, inspiring, assisting, protecting—aiding and directing our efforts, reproving and punishing our mistakes. He is our constant and personal companion and guide, by night and by day—about our path, and about our bed, and spying out all our ways. This is the Hebrew view of life ; and for pure beauty of thought, and sublimity of conception, it surpasses a thousandfold all that has ever been written in the pages of poetry or romance.

The only other possible view is that God—if indeed there be a God at all—has no part or lot in our affairs. The world is not His creature. We are not His people, nor the sheep of His pasture. Whether we fare well or ill, whether we stand or fall, whether we live or die, are matters in which He takes neither interest nor concern. We are nothing to Him ; and He is nothing to us. This is the atheistic view ; and for dark and gloomy horror it surpasses a hundred-thousandfold the wildest and most distracting dreams that a diseased imagination can conjure up.

Now, the point which it is desired to emphasise here is, that between these two alternative views of life there is no middle course. The iron laws of logic absolutely preclude any third alternative. The gloomy creed of atheism, however untenable it may be on other grounds, is at least not logically inconsistent with itself. There is nothing inherently self-contradictory in its grim and dismal tenets. There are, it is true, plenty of powerful and convincing arguments by which it may be discredited. It is possible, and even easy, to cite abundance of reasons for rejecting its baleful and unsatisfying doctrine. But in itself it cannot be said

to be positively irrational. It does not violate any of the fundamental laws of thought. It may be, and happily it is, a wildly improbable hypothesis; but it is not a logically impossible creed.

And at the other end of the scale the Jewish conception of life involves no breach of rational ideas. There is nothing irrational in supposing that a Being, capable of creating a world, should at the same time be attentive to the most trivial details. The terms 'great' and 'small' are purely relative. In the sphere of the Absolute they have neither place nor meaning. The idea that it is derogatory to God to suppose that He bends down from His throne on high to behold the things that are upon the earth, there to order and arrange the most insignificant events of our lives, involves a fallacy of the first magnitude. This attention to detail, so far from involving any loss of dignity, constitutes one of the sublimest attributes of greatness. That the Power Which made the world does condescend to provide for the most infinitesimal wants of the humblest of His creatures has been proved a thousand times by the wonders which Science has revealed through microscopic research. And if He has thought it worth His while to expend such infinite care and skill in the fashioning of an insect's wing, why should it be supposed to be beneath His dignity to care for those apparently trifling incidents of human life which, however petty in appearance, nevertheless make, in a sense which is very real to us, all the difference between happiness and misery? To this question there can be but one answer. The imagined indignity which is supposed to attach to triviality is in reality a characteristic of greatness. In this respect the Hebrew theory of life is unimpeachable. We may reject that

theory on other grounds. But it is certain that it cannot be impugned as being either illogical or absurd.

But if between these two extreme, but perfectly logical, theories of life we endeavour to steer a middle course, we instantly lapse into sheer irrationality. The only conceivable third alternative would be a view compounded partly of the one and partly of the other. If we desire to escape from the rigour of atheism, on the one hand, and the bewildering complexity of Judaism, on the other, we have no alternative but to assume that God does care for some of our concerns, but disregards others of them. And any attempt to formulate this supposition fails at the very outset. To suppose that God provides for the things which we call great, but ignores the things which we call small, not only flatly contradicts the positive evidence of scientific research, but also violates the logical requirements of thought. Either God cares for none of these things, or He cares and provides for all of them. Either He is nothing to me, or He is my all-in-all.

In order to satisfy ourselves how irrational and impossible is any attempt to steer a middle course between the two extreme theories of life which we have been depicting, we have but to make the attempt. At what point are we to suppose that God's care for His creatures stops? That He has provided for our use the world in which we live and the atmosphere which we breathe, every one outside the pale of atheism will readily admit. That He cares for such important factors in our lives as our food and raiment, none but atheists will deny. That these necessities of our existence are the gifts of His providence, all who believe in God at all must necessarily recognise. But we cannot logically limit the application of this view of things to

the factors just enumerated, or terminate our theory of God's care for His creatures at this or at any other point. Whatever considerations induce us (whether rightly or wrongly) to accept the view that God made the world, apply with precisely the same force to the most minute atom, and the still minuter corpuscles of which that atom is composed. There is exactly the same evidence in the one case as in the other. We may, as we have seen, maintain that He has made neither. But the iron laws of Logic forbid us to say that He made the one but did not make the other. What follows? The reasoning which thus applies to the greatest and the least applies with equal force to every intermediate entity which lies between these two terminals in the scale of existence. No matter what the entity may be, and no matter what its comparative importance in the scale of existence—be it a physical feature, such as a mountain, or a stone, or a grain of sand; or be it an organic being—a plant, or an insect, or a man; or a psychological entity—a desire or a repugnance, a hope or a fear, a pleasure or a pain; or be it an event—a success or a failure, a blessing or a disaster; in every case our choice is limited to one or other of the two extreme alternatives. Either God made nothing, or He made everything. Either He guides and determines none of the events of our lives, or He guides and determines them all. If, for want of a better mode of expression, we may be permitted to revive the old term Pantheism in the altered sense of expressing the theory that God is everywhere around us and within us, meeting us face to face in every conjuncture of our lives, whether great or small, and guiding and directing all our thoughts, words, and works, then we must say that the only two tenable



theories of life are Atheism, on the one hand, or Pantheism, on the other. For these two theories exhaust all conceivable possibilities. They are so absolutely antagonistic and refractory that they refuse to combine on any terms or in any proportions. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to be downright atheists, we must, in this sense of the word, be thorough and uncompromising pantheists.<sup>1</sup>

Probably the foregoing observations will have been sufficient to satisfy us of the untenability of the intermediate theory of life. But if we wish to realise to ourselves still more vividly how outrageous, from the logical—in other words, from the true—point of view, the intermediate theory really is, we cannot do better than apply to it the graphic test of nomenclature. With this object, let us set it before us in its true colours by calling it by its real name. Examined analytically, this pseudo-creed proves to be nothing else than an attempted amalgamation of Pantheism and Atheism. Let us, therefore, designate it by the only title which it has any right to claim, and call it Pan-atheism. No one will allege that this designation does the creed either more or less than justice. It is neither a libel nor a misrepresentation. On the contrary, it is an exact description of what the creed really is. And the description is not more self-contradictory than the thing described. But if so, the creed stands self-condemned by its very title. No one can pronounce the word Pan-atheism without contradicting himself. If the impossible creed which this pseudo-

<sup>1</sup> It will be observed that throughout this work the term *pantheism* is used in the sense defined above, and not in the cosmotheistic sense ordinarily attached to the word, namely, that the universe, conceived of as a whole, is God, and that there is no God but the combined forces and laws which are manifested in the existing universe.



term correctly designates is to survive at all, it must for ever remain unnamed. For even to utter its name is to pronounce its condemnation.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the conclusion to which the foregoing considerations have led us, because it constitutes the very bed-rock of all Religion. The fundamental concept on which is based every religious system that has ever existed, pagan, Judaic, and Christian alike, is the belief that there is a deity of some kind *who takes an active interest in human affairs and exerts an influence upon them*. In the immortal words of the poet,<sup>1</sup>

‘Sunt lacrymæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt.’

‘There is a Mind that directs events, and that sympathises with suffering.’ Directly we get this conception, no matter how crude and imperfect in form, we get a religion. Without it religion has no existence. It is not enough for religious purposes to believe in the existence of a deity. That is theism; but it is not religion. The point of departure between the theistic idea and the religious concept is the belief that *God is accessible to mankind*. To establish the existence of God is the province of theism; to establish relations with God is the province of Religion.

But if this be so, then it at once becomes obvious that there can be no truth of such vital moment to Religion as that which we have ventured to describe as Pantheism. From the point of view of Revealed Religion the detection of the utter untenability of the intermediate creed of pan-atheism is of the very last importance. For it serves to emphasise with a force which nothing else can supply the all-essential fact

<sup>1</sup> Virgil, *Æneid*, i. 462.

that our choice lies solely between pantheism and atheism; that if I would escape—as who would not?—the intolerable doctrine of blank atheism, I have absolutely no alternative but to embrace, with all the passion and energy of my innermost being, an unadulterated and uncompromising pantheism. And when, in spite of the prohibitions of violated logic, in spite of the mute protests of outraged reason, we see around us the vast majority of the human race drifting, in unresisting helplessness, into the toils of that suicidal compromise, accepting its impossible heresy as the doctrine by which they choose to live and in which they are content to die; is it not worth while to make almost any effort, if only we may startle ourselves out of that fatal lethargy which paralyses all religious activity in the benumbing atmosphere of the pan-atheistic creed?

Having thus fixed in our minds, with all possible emphasis, the fact that there are only two conceivable theories of life, the pantheistic and the atheistic; and that we must choose one or other of these two, because there is no third alternative; let us turn to consider, from the purely scientific point of view, the all-important practical question, Will it make any difference to us which of these two alternatives we select as the guiding principle of our lives, and, if so, what will that difference be? Very possibly it will be objected to the foregoing observations that they draw a distinction without a difference. Having granted—as we must—that the distinction is theoretically sound, what difference, we may ask, can it make in actual result whether we adopt the view that all our successes in life are the results of our own individual efforts, or whether we regard them as the gifts of a supernal

Power? What does it matter, in practice, whether we attribute our escape from some impending difficulty or danger to our own foresight and skill, or to the guiding hand and sheltering arm of our Father in heaven? In order to enable us to answer this question it is necessary to realise what exactly is the practical bearing upon life of each of the two alternative theories.

Translated out of its theoretical into practical terms, the creed of Atheism means that in every conjuncture in life, no matter how small and no matter how great, we trust solely to our own efforts. We regard ourselves as self-sufficing and self-sufficient. Whatever force we require to expend on any undertaking or any action we draw from our own internal natural resources. We ourselves are our own and only storehouses of energy; and consequently our capacity for effort is limited by the measure of our inherent faculties. An undertaking which requires the expenditure of a greater quantity or higher quality of energy than that which we are capable of elaborating within ourselves is beyond our reach. It is for us altogether outside the sphere of practical possibilities.

The creed of Pantheism, on the other hand, connotes that in every conjuncture in life, no matter how great and no matter how small, we trust solely to God both for guidance and for power. Like the atheistic creed, it recognises that within the limits of his natural potentialities a man is an automaton. But it also claims that he is something more. It asserts that it is possible for a human being to be *en rapport* with the Deity in such manner that a direct communication is established between himself and God, through which divine impulses are being constantly transmitted from God to man. These impulses are the sources of all his

energies, and constitute the motive force of all his actions. And to the extent to which his constitution is capable of responding to them he is actually possessed of divine power. His potentialities are limited only by the limitations of his capacity for response. If this capacity were perfect, he would himself be perfect. The one and only object of his life is, therefore, to cultivate and develop this responsive faculty by placing himself more and more completely in communion with God, conscious that by this means—and by this means only—perfection will eventually be attained: ‘Ye therefore shall be perfect, as *your heavenly Father is perfect.*’<sup>1</sup>

Thus the essential difference between the pantheist and the atheist is that, in all things, the one leans solely upon God for guidance and power; the other trusts solely in his own spontaneous and natural efforts. The one relies upon an external force, the other upon an internal. In a word, for practical purposes, Pantheism means God-reliance; Atheism means self-reliance.

Now, let us suppose for a moment, for the sake of argument, what we by no means concede as a fact, that both of these two methods are equally effectual so far as the attainment of an immediate object is concerned. Let us imagine two men—say, two professional men—of approximately equal capacities, and possessing approximately equal advantages; and let us assume that both are actuated by the perfectly legitimate desire to achieve by fair and honest means, and with a just appreciation of their moral and charitable obligations to others, a professional career. Let us assume that their ideas on all these matters are

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 48.

approximately identical, and that there is only one material difference between them, namely, that the one is a pantheist and the other an atheist. And, lastly, let us suppose that they both succeed in achieving their purpose, and attain to approximately equal measures of prosperity and success. The question which we propose to endeavour to answer is this: Does it make any difference, and if so, what difference does it make, which of the two rival theories of life they adopt? What does it matter whether they obtain their ends by means of self-reliance or by means of God-reliance, if it be conceded that the former is at least as successful a method as the latter?

The answer to this question is that, even if we admit, for the sake of argument, that the godless method is as successful as its rival in attaining its immediate objects, nevertheless it does make all the difference in the world which of the two methods we adopt. Granting, for the moment, that either method may be employed with equal success as regards apparent results, yet there is a difference between the two, so invisible that the world never notices it, yet so real that it renders success by the one method invaluable, and by the other worthless. The difference in productiveness may be infinitesimal or even nothing at all; but the difference upon ourselves is incalculable. The atheist and the pantheist may attain equal prosperity by the employment of their respective methods. But Religion and Philosophy unite in proclaiming that these equal achievements leave their respective achievers separated from one another by a gulf, the measure of which is the distance between Earth and Heaven.

What is this difference? This question will be best



answered by another question. What is the greatest vice in the world? There can be no doubt as to the true answer to this question. It may be difficult, or even impossible, to classify in their true order of demerit all the other innumerable weaknesses to which mankind is prone. We may hold different views as to the comparative wickedness of all sins but one. If a hundred philosophers were to set to work to determine, independently of one another, the true order of precedence of the thousand and one faults of erring humanity, they would produce a hundred codes of which no two would coincide with one another. Upon this question no two men are, or ever can be, agreed. Here, if anywhere, the maxim holds true, *Quot homines, tot sententiæ*. Philosophers and divines alike will rank in different orders all sins—except one. But there is one vice, banned alike by Religion and Science, accursed of God and man; a vice so subtle that we are scarcely conscious of its existence, so ubiquitous that we are none of us free from its insidious encroachments, so unobtrusive that it is scarcely recognised as a vice at all, yet a vice so fatal in its consequences that it stands apart from all others as the crowning sin of existence,

‘by merit raised  
To that bad eminence,’

—the vice of selfishness.

This is no random statement or problematical assertion. It expresses one of those rare and unique facts upon which all the intellectual world must necessarily be agreed. Every one will admit that the antithesis of selfishness is love. And every one will concede that love is the greatest of all the virtues. If there were

any question upon this last assertion, it is absolutely confirmed by the joint verdict of Religion and Science. In the language of Religion, 'the greatest of these is love.'<sup>1</sup> In the language of Science, love is the concentrating force of the social sphere. All that gravitation is in the physical universe, that is love in the psychical. Eliminate affection from the category of human virtues—crush love out of existence—and the whole fabric of society instantly crumbles to atoms. Courage, rectitude, genius, perseverance, industry, probity, thrift—all the brightest treasures and ornaments of life pale their uneffectual fires before the superlative splendour of 'the purple light of love.'<sup>2</sup> And if love is the greatest of all virtues; and if love is the antithesis of selfishness; then it must logically follow that selfishness stands at the opposite pole of existence. If love be the greatest virtue, selfishness must needs be the greatest vice of all.

If we are asked to assign a scientific reason why selfishness is the most fatal of all defects, it is by no means difficult to do so. We have but to remember that the keynote of Science is Evolution, and that there are steps in the scale of evolutionary progress. There is one department of evolution, called Inorganic Evolution, which governs and determines the changes which take place in the inorganic world. There is another and a higher department of evolution, termed Organic Evolution, which regulates the progress and development of organic beings, both vegetal and animal. And there is yet a third department of evolution, known as Superorganic Evolution, which busies itself with the development of man's highest faculties, social,

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Gray, *The Progress of Poesy*. I 3, 17

psychical, ethical, and spiritual. Consequently, from the strictly scientific point of view, a man's highest duty consists in taking every possible advantage of those influences around him which will carry him to the highest attainable rung in the ladder of existence. Whatever duties we may owe to others, the most imperative duty which each of us owes to himself is to subject himself, as far as possible, to those forces which will render him most amenable to these highest evolutionary impulses.

And this being so, we have but to consider what are the essential requisites which must be fulfilled in order to render any entity amenable to the operation of evolution. For this purpose it is absolutely necessary that the subject, be it an inorganic entity or an organic being, should be plastic, malleable, impressionable to external stimuli, responsive to impulses received from without. Whatever tends to make it plastic and impressionable is an influence which tends to render it amenable to evolutionary impulses; and whatever influences tend to keep it in this condition are just the influences which will enable it to attain to the highest grade of evolution to which its constitution permits it to rise. And contrariwise, whatever influence tends to make it hard and irresponsive, checks its progress in the scale of evolution and prevents its further development.

Now, it is obvious that in the evolution of the human character selfishness is the characteristic which, of all others, has the greatest tendency to harden the heart and the affections, deadening them to external stimuli, and rendering them irresponsive to the appeals of sympathy and compassion. And on the other hand, love—the antithesis to selfishness—has the very oppo-

site effect. The cultivation of this highest of all the virtues opens out the heart to the reception of every ennobling impulse. Under the influence of this elevating stimulus the heart grows warm and plastic. The selfish man is already close to the end of his tether in the scale of moral development. That he should evolve into anything higher than his present condition is a sheer impossibility, for 'how dwelleth the love of God in him?'<sup>1</sup> If he love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?<sup>2</sup> But the unselfish man is capable of a higher development which owns no limit. He possesses within himself a potentiality for evolution which can scale the heights of heaven itself. And thus these two contradictory impulses, by that strange perversity which characterises their products, furnish a living illustration of Christ's well-known paradox. Selfishness, by its very efforts to gain all for its own gratification, loses its very self. Love, in the very act of seeking to lose itself, unconsciously gains the very life which it seems to be madly casting away. 'Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.'<sup>3</sup>

Here, then, we come in sight of the answer to our question, What is the practical difference between the two theories of life—between the atheistic and the pantheistic views? The answer is that the godless man is mistaking his whole vocation in life. In the moral, as in the physical, world the object of existence is that the experiences of life may so act upon our moral beings as to render them capable of a higher development. The rewards which crown success, and the disappointments which attend failure, are, in them-

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 17.<sup>2</sup> 1 John iv. 20.<sup>3</sup> Luke xvii. 33 (R.V.).

selves, of secondary moment. The matter of real importance is the effect which our successes and our failures leave upon ourselves. If they leave us crabbed, hard, and unimpressible, then our successes are failures and our failures are disasters. Then our progress is retrograde, and our life is lived in vain. For then we are developing in the wrong direction. We are pursuing a course in which every step carries us further from heaven. But if they leave us more sympathetic and more generous than they found us, more full of compassion and loving-kindness, more intolerant of our own defects, more tender towards the weaknesses and shortcomings of others, then our successes are triumphs and our failures are blessings in disguise. For then we are lively witnesses to the truth of Christ's other paradox, that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.'<sup>1</sup> Then, indeed, we are fulfilling our true mission in life, and may run with confidence the race that is set before us. For then all is well with us; yes, even though care and sorrow befall us, and though happiness itself take wing and flee away.

And here it is easy to see how destructive of that capacity for expansion, which is a necessary ingredient in the faculty for spiritual evolution, a self-centred life must necessarily be. The man whose actions are guided by this atheistic principle is adopting a mode of life which must necessarily end with the grave. Under the baleful influence of this fatal method his faculties for the higher development close in upon themselves. Self-reliant and self-centred, he is pursuing a course which is always leading back to self. He is following a path which, for evolutionary purposes, terminates abruptly in a *cul de sac*.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xx. 35.



In vivid contrast to the deadening tendencies which thus necessarily ensue upon the adoption of the self-reliant theory of life, the practice of God-reliance leads straight to the very opposite result. Instead of growing inwards, the moral faculties open out to a potentiality for indefinite expansion. Under the guidance of this vivifying influence every step in life brings us into closer touch with divine beneficence. Every good effort rewarded, every mistake punished and pardoned, discloses a fresh vista of the eternal purposes—opens out to us a fresh avenue to the higher life. To be conscious of the fact that we have always by our side a Friend Who is waiting to be gracious, Who is watching over us with more than a father's care, Whose wisdom in guiding our steps aright is infallible, Whose love for us is boundless, Whose power to carry us triumphantly through every difficulty and danger is resistless, against Whose strength the utmost might of our enemies is mere weakness and imbecility, Whose readiness to aid us is checked only by our own tardiness in asking, Whose ability to help us is limited only by the deficiencies of our trust in Him; to realise all this is to be brought into living contact with God Himself; and to live a life moulded and shaped by such an experience as this is to bring down heaven to earth. Here is a mode of life which opens up before us an illimitable prospect of evolutionary possibility—a life in which every step that we take is an advance

‘Upon the great world’s altar stairs  
That slope through darkness up to God.’

This is the sum of the whole matter. The self-reliant man is leaning upon a staff which must necessarily fail with the grave. The God-reliant man is trusting

to a support which will carry him triumphantly into eternity itself.

What, then, to sum up the foregoing considerations, are the conclusions at which we have arrived? A scientific analysis of life, in its relations to Revealed Religion, discloses the fact that life in this connection presents to us two, and only two, rival theories, which we have christened, respectively, Pantheism and Atheism, the one or other of which we *must* adopt. For these two theories exhaust all the possibilities of the case. And although the vast majority of mankind, with the thoughtlessness characteristic of the crowd, habitually adopt a third alternative, which we have distinguished as Pan-atheism, that self-contradictory theory is found on examination to involve such a violation of the fundamental laws of reason as necessarily compels its rejection. It is possible—and highly probable—that the facilities which this untenable theory offers for escaping the uncompromising rigour of Atheism, on the one hand, and the bewildering complexities of Pantheism, on the other, will continue to ensure its acceptance by the unthinking masses as a convenient compromise between the two; but the thoughtful student of life, who has the fear of Science before his eyes, and who is determined that in his choice of life his footsteps shall be guided by the dictates of truth rather than of convenience, will recognise its sheer untenability, and will discard it at once and for ever.

Having thus impressed upon our minds the momentous fact that our choice is limited to the pantheistic and the atheistic creeds, we proceeded to consider the practical question, whether anything really turns upon the choice which we may make between these two.

Does it make any practical difference, and if so, what difference does it make, whether we choose Pantheism or Atheism as the guiding principle of our lives?

With a view to obtaining an answer to this question of questions, we assumed for the sake of argument (without admitting in fact) that the force of self-reliance (which is the product of the atheistic creed) is as effective a force, for the purpose of attaining the immediate results at which we aim, as the force of God-reliance (which is the product of the pantheistic creed). And we found that on this assumption the two views of life lead to widely different results. Even supposing that two men, possessed of equal opportunities, should have obtained by the end of their lives equal material results; yet, if the one has persistently and systematically obtained his results by means of self-reliance, and the other by God-reliance, the two men themselves, at the close of their lives, will be standing at the antipodes of the universe. To the one man the potentialities of life will have been exhausted; to the other they will scarcely have begun. To the one death is a *cul de sac*; to the other, an open door.

It must not for a moment be supposed that the foregoing conclusion rests upon unproved assertion. It is as demonstrable and as certain as any fact in science. That evolution acts undeviatingly upon the mind is a truth of no less certitude than that evolution acts upon the body. Every act that a man performs leaves his body a different body from what it was before. And every thought that passes through the mind of man leaves on the mind an indelible impress. Hence, if two men perform the same act from two different motives, even though the act be the same, the

effect upon them is different; and if they were equal before the act, after it they are unequal. What follows? If two men through a lifetime habitually act on two such diametrically opposite motive-forces as God-effacing self-reliance, on the one hand, and self-effacing God-reliance, on the other, they *must*, at the close of life, be two totally different men. And the difference between their final constitutions will be proportioned to the difference between the methods which they have respectively adopted. The self-reliant man *must* gradually grow selfish; the God-reliant man *must* gradually grow Godlike.

Are we asked to prove these two propositions—that self-reliance must eventually lead to selfishness, and God-reliance to Godlikeness? Their proof is easy. For it follows from what has already been said. The self-reliant man is self-sufficing and self-centred. He is continually harking back to self. Every excursion that he makes into the region of surrounding things is checked by that fatal recoil with which his own self-sufficiency is continually throwing him back upon himself. From that centre there is for him no escape. He cannot get rid of it for a moment. It is not denied that he may be a man whom Nature has endowed with generous instincts. Probably the vast majority of men are so endowed. But the habitual practice of self-sufficing self-reliance can but end in one result. His thoughts, his instincts, his efforts, his actions, his interests, are always pointing to the loadstone of self. *There* is all his treasure. And thither, sooner or later, his affections are sure to follow; for where his treasure is, there will his heart be also.

The truth is that selfishness is related to self-reliance as a logical corollary—a necessary consequence. Its

very name is a patronymic, which marks its blood-relationship to its lineal ancestor. And the steps in its pedigree are not difficult to trace. Self-reliant—self-sufficing — self-satisfying — self-satisfied — self-centred—self-regarding—selfish. No one can glance at this genealogy without realising how direct is the lineal relationship between the two terminals of the series.

Nor is it less easy to show that God-reliance must necessarily produce Godlikeness. If self-reliance and God-reliance are antitheses, then their respective products must be antitheses also. The ultimate product of self-reliance is, as we have seen, selfishness. Therefore the ultimate product of God-reliance must be whatever is the antithesis of selfishness. But the antithesis of selfishness is love. Therefore God-reliance must necessarily lead to love. And love *is* God—for ‘God is love.’



## CHAPTER VIII

### PAGANISM

A STORY is told of Bion, the Greek poet and sceptic, that on a certain occasion he was sailing on a winter voyage across the Tyrrhenian Sea, when a violent storm arose, so that the ship and all on board were in imminent peril of destruction. And the mariners, who were a set of wicked and dissolute men, began calling upon their gods to save them. But Bion bade them keep quiet, that their gods might not know they were there.

There is an exquisite admixture of humour in the advice thus cynically proffered by Bion. It is heavily charged with caustic insinuation. Of the sailors it suggests that, though their lives had been such that they might more fittingly expect punishment than aid, yet they themselves were so insignificant that there was at least a chance that they might escape detection and punishment if they only kept quiet. Of the gods it insinuates that they were so inattentive to the needs of their suppliants that they would never be aware of their present peril, if it were not expressly brought to their attention; so malevolent as to be more likely to chastise than to succour, if, by some unhappy chance, they should happen to discover the position; so impotent that they would be only too glad to snatch this golden opportunity to retaliate for past offences—as

though they were unable to create such an occasion for themselves. All this is crowded into Bion's pregnant advice. But to whichever of his various innuendoes we choose to attach especial emphasis, the gist of the story in its relations to paganism remains the same. For it assumes as a natural conclusion, deducible from the theology current at the time, that there were intervals of inattention on the part of the presiding deities, during which the affairs of their votaries were disregarded; intervals during which, for better or for worse, communion between god and man was for a time suspended, and during which, therefore, human beings were left to their own devices, to shift as best they could for themselves.

And thus the story of Bion furnishes an exegesis, in concrete terms, of the doctrine of intermittent interference. It implies, if it does not expressly assert, that there was then prevalent a belief that the forces of divine beneficence or malevolence—as the case might be—were discontinuous in their operation. It formulates the creed that the heavenly powers, which were then supposed to exist, took an active interest in some—but in some only—of the concerns of the human family, ignoring and disregarding the rest.

It is obvious that this doctrine of the intermittent and occasional interference by the divine powers in the affairs of human life is a necessary corollary, deducible from the pagan conception of Religion. A pantheon of wayward gods and passionate goddesses, endowed with different and strictly limited capacities, and swayed by the shifting motives of passion or caprice, necessitates the supposition that some human affairs are controlled by divine influences, and that others are left to take care of themselves. Tossed hither

and thither on the waves of uncertainty by such turbulent and conflicting forces, man may well have been regarded as little better than a helpless flotsam, at one moment the plaything of some doting but fickle goddess, at another the sport of chance or fate. As long as men continued to believe that their destinies were at the mercy of numerous powers, more or less in conflict with one another, so long they were logically compelled to believe that there were limitations to the extent to which their affairs were supervised by heavenly influences. Even supposing that an occasional individual might by special favour succeed in attaching to himself some patron-god or some goddess-lover, so constant in purpose as to preclude mutability, so powerful as to defy opposition, so exempt from the partialities of fancy or caprice as to ensure a continuity of protection; yet, even so, such divine tutelage must have been the privilege of the rare and favoured few—some Venus-derived Æneas, some Thetis-born Achilles. But the members of the common crowd, blest with no heavenly ancestry, and possessed of no special claim to supernal regard, must, under such conditions, have been frequently left to languish under a long night of divine neglect. Just at the crisis of some impending peril or disaster, when guidance was most requisite and help most needed, it must often have happened that a man's patron-god—if he were so fortunate as to possess one at all—was thwarted by some more powerful and opposing deity, or was engaged in some more engrossing occupation—like Baal, 'talking, or pursuing, or in a journey, or asleep and not to be awaked.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, in tracing out the anatomy of Religion and

<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings xviii. 27.

estimating the relative values to be attributed to the various parts of that anatomy in respect of their influence upon human conduct, it must not be forgotten, still less must it be denied, that pagan concepts, in formulating the imperfect and mistaken creeds to which they gave rise, have rendered a service of priceless value to mankind. In spite of its glaring defects and manifest absurdities, Paganism contained within it a nucleus of truth which, as we have seen, was destined to furnish the material which was to be employed in the production of inspired Religion. It supplied the matrix into which, at the appropriate time, the vitalising germ of the Judaic Religion was to be infused by an act of divine revelation. This all-important fact is almost universally disregarded. Repelled by the grotesque deformities of thought which gradually attached themselves to pagan beliefs, we are apt to ignore, or, at least, to depreciate, the extraordinary merits which those beliefs are entitled to claim as their own. But these merits are simply incalculable. Indeed, they have transformed the whole aspect of existence. To have succeeded in impressing upon the human mind, with a logic which proved itself irresistible, the belief in a dual life, and in the resulting possibility of holding converse with supernatural beings, is a feat the magnitude of which has never been approached in any other department of intellectual effort. Yet this, and nothing less than this, is what is really denoted whenever we pronounce the word Paganism. We habitually employ this term in a disparaging sense. We associate it with everything that is degraded and untrue. But, in spite of this, we are uttering a word which summarises in eight letters the greatest mental achievement that the

human intellect has ever accomplished, and which—with the single exception of Inspiration—has had a more potent effect upon human life and character than any other force or agency whatsoever.

How deeply the Judaic Religion is indebted to Paganism for the two fundamental truths upon which it is based, and how true it is that Judaism was not a new and independent Religion, but consisted of new and added truths injected by revelation into the fundamental truths which had already been established by Paganism, are facts which are seldom realised but are easily demonstrated. When the Judaic Code, in one of the earliest—perhaps the very earliest—of its utterances, declared that ‘In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,’<sup>1</sup> it is self-evident that the writer was addressing himself to an audience whom he assumed to be already familiar with the ideas connoted by the term ‘God.’ When, again, in a scarcely later utterance the Judaic Code represents the serpent as declaring ‘Ye shall be as Gods’ (or ‘as God’),<sup>2</sup> the author is clearly taking it for granted that the notion of the accessibility to mankind of a spiritual existence would be perfectly intelligible to his readers without further comment or explanation. And if so, then it necessarily follows, from the writer’s tacit acceptance of these unexplained truths, that Judaism is built upon a borrowed foundation. The abruptness with which they are introduced, without apology, comment, or explanation, proves that these notions were already prevalent among mankind before the advent of the Jewish revelation. And from this, again, it follows that they were the product of pagan beliefs; for there was no other source from which they could have been

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 5.



derived. And thus these fragments of truth, which had been evolved by the unorganised ideas of Paganism, were utilised as a matrix into which to inject the germ of the Jewish revelation, just as in the physical sphere the germ of plant-vitality was infused into appropriately evolved portions of inorganic matter.

But while Paganism is thus deserving of the universal gratitude of the human race, as having provided the material which was designed to serve as the vehicle to mankind of the truths of Revealed Religion, and without which Revealed Religion could never, in the existing order of things, have been imparted to mankind at all, it contained one defect—or, perhaps we should rather say, one limitation—which robbed it of all its intrinsic worth and rendered it valueless except as the destined vehicle of the higher truth. The fact is that, apart from revelation, the recognition of the duality of life and of the resulting possibility of communicating with supernatural beings, marked a terminus of thought. When once the human mind had grasped these two sublime conceptions, it had reached the limit, in this direction, of mental effort. Along this line of exploration into the region of the unknown further progress was barred. For at this point the way was stopped by impenetrable darkness. Up to this point the natural evolution of thought could carry us. Beyond this stage natural evolution could take us no further. What was wanted was a new and redirective impulse. It was certain that there must somewhere be a path leading to a further and a higher department of truth. But without the illumination of some extrinsic ray, there was nothing—and there never could be anything—to show which was the road to be followed.

Accordingly, it was at this point that God intervened with the required act of revelation. Into the seething plasma of the pagan pseudo-religious concepts—evolved as it now was up to the requisite standard of development to render it capable of responding to the divine thrill—He infused the vivifying influence of Inspiration. ‘With His word He quickened it.’<sup>1</sup> And under that touch of life the unorganised mass of confused and distorted notions—so truly false, yet all the while so falsely true—formed and shaped itself into the organic code which constitutes the Jewish Religion.

But now, what was the divinely-imparted secret which this new revelation disclosed, and which raised by its vitalising influence the inorganic misbeliefs of paganism into organic beliefs of so high an order as to be destined in their turn to form the matrix into which the vital germ of Christianity itself was to be infused by a further act of divine revelation? What is the quickening germ of truth which constitutes the kernel of the Jewish Religion, and from which all other Old Testament doctrines are but offshoots and descendants? In order to answer these questions let us examine a little more in detail what exactly were the merits and what the defects of the pagan creed.

We have seen that at the earliest stage of the evolution of pagan concepts the forces of Religion consisted of the influence of the belief in the continued existence after death of ancestors who were still powerful to help or to harm. The natural effect of this influence upon human conduct was to induce human beings to endeavour to propitiate the dead, but still living, ancestor, by performing such acts as it was

<sup>1</sup> Psalm cxix, 50.

thought would be acceptable, and by abstaining from doing anything which would be likely to offend. The conciliatory acts principally took the form of gifts of food and other offerings which were made to the dead, and worship which was rendered to them; while the fear of offending the deceased ancestor induced men to avoid saying anything which, if overheard by him, might give offence. It is not improbable that the familiar saying, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, which is still current amongst ourselves, is a relic of this primitive superstition.

Now, this primordial religious concept, that human affairs are influenced by spiritual agencies, is conspicuous not only as being the common property of all the three great orders of Religion, but also as having maintained its existence continuously throughout the whole course of the evolution of each of those orders. Whilst every other pagan notion has changed, it alone has remained constant. In pagan systems, for instance, it is just as prominent a feature at the latest and most highly evolved stages as at the earliest. Thus, to cite one or two well-known illustrations from the classics, the first thought of the seeker, in search for something which he could not find, was to invoke heavenly guidance; and every clue which helped to direct his steps was, in his view, a token of divine intervention. So Æneas commenced his search for the golden bough with a prayer for aid:—

‘ Ah ! would some god but show me now  
In all that wood the golden bough !

Scarce had he said, when lo ! there flew  
Two snow-white doves before his view,  
And on the sward took rest ;

His mother's<sup>1</sup> birds the hero knew,  
 And joyful prayer addrest :  
 "Hail gentle guides, before me fly,  
 And mark my pathway on the sky :  
 So lead me where the bough of gold  
 Grooms rich above its parent mould.  
 And thou, my mother, aid my quest,  
 Nor leave me doubtful and distrest."  
 He stayed his steps, intent to know  
 What signs they give, which way they go.  
 By turns they feed, by turns they fly,  
 Just in the range of human eye ;  
 Till, when they scent the noisome gale  
 Which dark Avernus' jaws exhale,  
 Aloft they rise in rapid flight :  
 Then on the tree at once alight,  
 Where flashing through the leaves is seen  
 The golden bough's contrasted sheen.'<sup>2</sup>

So, too, with misfortunes. Every disaster was regarded as a visitation inflicted by some god or goddess. The Trojan heroes, in their storm-tossed wanderings in search of Italia's fleeting shores, recognised in every buffet of wind or wave only another token of

'Fell Juno's unforgetting hate.'<sup>3</sup>

The Greek charioteer, defeated in the race, through dropping his lash or through the snapping of his pole, saw in the untoward accident no symptom of his own unskilfulness, no freak of wayward chance, but the malicious intervention of some jealous goddess:—

'Then had he lost or left a doubtful prize ;  
 But angry Phœbus to Tydides flies,  
*Strikes from his hand the scourge*, and renders vain  
 His matchless horses' labour on the plain.

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<sup>1</sup> Aphrodite.

<sup>2</sup> Virgil, *Æneid*, vi. 187-204 (Conington's translation).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 4.

Rage fills his eye with anguish, to survey  
Snatched from his hope the glories of the day.  
The fraud celestial Pallas sees with pain,  
Springs to her knight and gives the scourge again,  
And fills his steeds with vigour. At a stroke  
*She breaks his rival's chariot from the yoke :*  
Shot headlong from his seat, beside the wheel,  
Prone on the dust the unhappy master fell.<sup>1</sup>

Thus the notion of divine intervention in human affairs is the basis of all religious systems. It was the central idea of pagan religion. It was the central idea of Judaism. And it is still the central idea of modern Christianity. If we wish to emphasise to ourselves how imperishable are the natural ties of relationship by which Judaism and, through Judaism, Christianity are bound to their pagan progenitor, how truly *natural* are the lines of descent in Religion's genealogy, and consequently, how enormous is the debt which both Judaism and Christianity owe to the pagan beliefs of which they are the lineal descendants, we need not do more than observe with what tenacity pagan systems of religion clung to this all-essential truth, and with what unshaken immutability this truth has, under the Judaic and Christian dispensations, withstood the shocks of time and change.

It is obvious that in this pagan belief is contained the germ of the idea to which the Bible attaches such enormous importance under the name of Faith. The notion that heavenly guidance and aid were obtainable from supernatural powers necessarily involved the further conception that a certain amount of reliance might be placed in the divine beings from whom the assistance was derived. It is equally obvious that the amount of confidence which could be safely reposed in

<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, xxiii. 461-474 (Pope's translation).



these divine agencies would depend upon the degree of certainty with which the suppliant could rely upon receiving the desired assistance, and the efficacy of the assistance when it came. And this, again, would depend upon, first, the willingness, and secondly, the ability, of the invoked deity to assist. If it were absolutely certain that some Omnipotent Being was always ready to give efficacious help in every difficulty, then such a Being would deserve, and could command, the entire and complete confidence of His votaries. The man who held in his hand the key that would unlock this inexhaustible store of energy, would for all practical purposes be himself endowed with omnipotence. And the amount of trust which he would repose in this infallible resource would depend upon the vividness with which he realised to himself that he actually possessed it. Perfect consciousness of the possession of perfect power would naturally generate perfect confidence.

But as long as a man believed that his safety and his success, so far as supernatural interference was concerned, depended upon a divinity inconstant in will, imperfect in capacity, and intermittent in action, it would be impossible for him to place complete reliance on such an imperfect source of help. He would place *some* reliance on it. But the confidence which it would induce in him would be very far from perfect.

Now, it is exactly at this point that Paganism comes into touch with Judaism. This is at once the point of contact and the point of departure between the two. It marks the dividing of the ways. The strength of Paganism is that it contained the germ of a real 'faith.' Its weakness lies in the fact that the limitations necessarily imposed by the polytheistic

conception were such that the highest development to which this incipient faith could possibly attain left it but a shadow of the coming reality. At its best it was nothing better than a prophetic echo of the perfected faith that was to be.

On the other hand, the disclosure made by the Judaic revelation of One Only God, Almighty, All-wise and All-loving, introduced the possibility of a perfect faith. It placed at man's disposal just the materials which were at once necessary and sufficient for the building up of an unfaltering trust in divine guidance and aid. All that in this respect had hitherto been lacking was here supplied. The one great weakness of Paganism found here its consummation in inflexible strength.

Here, then, we see the true relations between Paganism and Judaism. Paganism supplied the unorganised material which the organising touch of divine revelation was to convert into an organic Faith. These unorganised truths of Paganism occupy in the natural history of Religion a position exactly analogous to that occupied by the inorganic kingdom in the physical sphere. And in connection with this aspect of the case we must be careful not to overlook the fact—so often forgotten—that the beliefs referred to were *true* beliefs. The conceptions of an unseen spiritual existence, and of unseen spiritual beings; of the possibility of holding communication through prayer with these mysterious agencies, of receiving help from them, and of exercising some measure—uncertain and indefinite, it is true, but still some measure—of faith in them; all these are truths which Judaism and, through Judaism, Christianity inherited from Paganism. And upon these pagan truths the superstructure of Revealed Religion has been built.

It seems at first sight to be obvious, from what has just been said, that Paganism played no part in the Great Dilemma discussed in the last chapter. For while the monotheistic conception of Revealed Religion necessarily gives rise to that dilemma by forcing upon us the belief that God controls either all or none of the events of life, the polytheistic conception, which is characteristic of Paganism, not only permitted but necessitated the theory that human events are partly governed, and partly not governed, by divine agencies. But a little reflection will satisfy us that though Paganism, down to the advent of the monotheistic revelation, actually precluded the dilemma, nevertheless Paganism did in fact take an all-important part in the eventual establishment of the dilemma. For the truth is that Paganism furnished the lemma on which the dilemma is based. A clear appreciation of this fact has such an important bearing upon the true understanding of the real relations between Paganism and Judaism, and the place which the former occupies in the anatomy of Truth, that it will be worth while to pursue the subject a little further.

The word 'lemma' is a term well known to logicians, and is defined as 'a preliminary or auxiliary proposition, demonstrated or accepted for immediate use in the demonstration of some other proposition'; and it is obvious that if the true relations of Paganism to Judaism, and, through Judaism, to Christianity, are those demonstrated in the foregoing remarks, then Paganism performs the function of supplying the lemma which was required for the demonstration of the truths of Revealed Religion. We have already remarked upon the noteworthy fact that the Judaic Code makes no attempt to prove or explain the preliminary truths of

the duality of life and the existence of spiritual beings, which constitute the fundamental basis of all religious beliefs. These things are assumed as if already proved and understood. Their existence is taken for granted. And this apparent omission is not infrequently cited by unfriendly critics as a grave—indeed, a fatal—defect in the code of Revealed Religion, as if she were guilty of a monstrous *petitio principii*.

But a moment's consideration of the *comprehensive* view of Religion, unfolded in the foregoing chapters, should satisfy us that the criticism is misplaced. As we have seen, the author of the opening chapter of Genesis starts with the assumption that he was addressing an audience already perfectly familiar with the ideas connoted by the term 'God.' He takes it for granted that the notion of the accessibility to mankind of a spiritual existence would be intelligible to his readers without explanation or comment. If, then, the code of Judaism purported to be a complete compendium of religious ideas, the hostile criticism would be more than justified. For the code would be as defective as a mathematical text-book which should omit such elementary factors as notation or the multiplication tables, or as a treatise on geometry which should forget to insert the axioms and postulates of that science.

But a *comprehensive* examination of Religion supplies a complete and satisfactory explanation of the apparent hiatus. For it shows that Judaism began where Paganism ended. Long before the Judaic system made its first appearance, the pagan world had satisfied itself of the truth of these fundamental religious conceptions. And the founders of the Jewish cult wisely accepted and appropriated these beliefs as



requiring neither re-statement nor re-demonstration. In adopting this course Judaism was forestalling a practice which, centuries later, was habitually practised by the early Christian teachers. To attack, without necessity, a cherished and widely prevalent belief, is always difficult, and often disastrous. A subtler and more efficacious method is, not to contradict, but to redirect. The early days of Christianity afford many illustrations of the successful adoption of this ingenious practice. Christmas Day furnishes a familiar instance. It is often asked why, in the complete absence of any historical evidence as to the exact day of Christ's birth, the twenty-fifth of December should have been selected. The answer to this question is highly instructive. Centuries before the Christian era, the twenty-fifth of December had been celebrated as the birthday of the Persian Sun-god Mithras—*Dies Natalis Solis Invicti*; and the festival was a well-established rite when the first missionaries of Christianity appeared upon the scene. To have attempted to crush out a popular institution, when the immensely easier and more effectual method of diverting it was available, would have been unwise indeed. A railway train, travelling at express speed, cannot be suddenly arrested without disaster; but it may be diverted on to another line in a moment with perfect ease, and, provided only that the angle of deflection be not too abrupt, with perfect safety. And accordingly, the propounders of Christianity proceeded to appropriate to their own uses the obnoxious, but not unpliant, festival. 'You are quite right,' they said, in effect, to their hearers, 'in dedicating this day to the celebration of the Sun-god's birth. By all means continue the rite—but with a variation. For the fact



is that you have made a mistake. The real Patron-Saint of this happy day is another Sun Which you have not seen, and another God Whom you have not learnt to worship.' And thus, by an easy transition, without shock or break, the old rites flowed on, but in an altered channel. The mythical Sun-god, Mithras, disappeared; and the day was dedicated to the birth of the new Sun-God Whom the Christians worshipped under the old-new name of the 'Sun of Righteousness.'<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen at once that in this skilful diversion of old ideas into new channels of thought Christianity was doing, though on a comparatively small scale, exactly what, on an immeasurably larger scale, Judaism had done long centuries earlier. In silently accepting as granted, without making any attempt to re-prove or even to re-state them, those imperishable though rough-cast fragments of truth which Paganism had evolved from its own inner-consciousness, the framers of the Judaic Code were appropriating to their own inspired purposes the beliefs which they found already prevalent in the world around them. 'You are right enough,' they were tacitly saying to their hearers, 'in your belief in the existence of a divine Being. You are right in believing that in virtue of your own divine potentialities He is accessible to your prayers, your praises, and your sacrifices. All this is common ground; so we need not spend time and labour in treading it again. You are right—but with a difference.' And then, like skilful refiners and fullers, they proceeded to defecate and cleanse these unrefined truths by the purifying influence of that monotheistic revelation, which is 'like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 2.

But if so, then it is obvious that Paganism supplied the lemma which was absolutely necessary to a true understanding of the Judaic Code. For it furnished just those preliminary or auxiliary propositions which the Jewish writers accepted for immediate use in the demonstration of the Judaic revelation. And it is curious to observe that in performing this function it exactly conformed to the method adopted on the homologous occasion in the physical sphere. When the germ of plant-vitality was injected into lifeless inorganic matter, it was not all inorganic matter that was utilised as the receptacle of the new and living germ. Only that specialised portion of matter which had evolved up to the required standard of plasticity and complexity to fit it for the reception of the newly created tenant was selected for the purpose. All other matter remained torpid and dead—hopelessly out-distanced in the race of evolution. And so, too, in the psychical sphere. Not all the conceptions of Paganism were the honoured recipients of that divinely imparted secret. Not every pagan idea was destined to take a part in that re-directed evolution. The selected notions were few and rare,—only those which contained the plastic elements of truth; only those which were concerned with the conception of a spiritual existence and the possibility of a spiritual communion. All others were left out of consideration—eliminated as worthless for the required purpose.

But if this be true, then it necessarily follows that the comprehensive study of Religion, in thus disclosing to us the fact that Paganism furnished Judaism with the lemma which was necessary for the purposes of Revealed Religion, simultaneously discloses the further complementary fact that Paganism played also a lead-

ing part in the establishment of that Great Dilemma, the due appreciation of which is one of the most important products to be derived from the comprehensive study of Religion. For observe once more that the dilemma itself has no place or lot in Paganism. As it is the one great merit of Paganism to have discovered and proved the existence of Spirit and the spiritual potentialities dormant in mankind, so it is its one great defect that the pagan conception of the universe admits, and even compels, the totally untrue notion that human affairs are partly regarded, and partly disregarded, by the Powers on high. The belief, as we have seen, in the multiplicity of supernal Powers, necessarily entailed the idea of differentiations among those Powers, in respect both of capacity and of goodness. And as long as this system of beliefs prevailed, it was from the logical point of view both permissible and imperative to conclude that some individuals received more, and some less, celestial attention than others; and that, even in the case of the same individual, some of his affairs were divinely directed and others neglected.

It will be seen from the foregoing considerations that the inter-relations of Paganism and Revealed Religion include two antagonistic factors—on the one hand, in consequence of the fundamental defect of Paganism, an impassable gulf of separation between the two; and on the other, by virtue of the truth which was common to both, a close and intimate connecting link between them. This strange admixture of separation and connection is to be found also in the physical sphere. An illustration will make this clear.

In the chapter on *The Natural History of Religion* we remarked upon the startling resemblances which

certain pagan beliefs exhibit to corresponding beliefs of Revealed Religion. In the physical sphere an exactly parallel phenomenon is to be found. Every one is familiar with the exquisite fern-like traceries which are to be seen on our window-panes on frosty mornings; and every one has noticed how exactly they resemble the form and structure of living ferns. Now, these traceries are to living ferns just what the beliefs of Paganism are to the beliefs of Judaism. They possess something of the form and something of the beauty of living ferns, but none of the life. Moreover, they exhibit the further remarkable parallelism that, whereas living ferns flourish and grow in the sunlight, and are indeed creatures of the light, their frost-begotten simulacra are produced in the darkness of the night, and melt away before the first touch of the morning beams. The light, which is life to the vegetable fern, is death to its frozen counterfeit. And further still, while the living fern is a member of the vegetable kingdom, which furnishes the necessary food on which all animal life is supported, the frozen copy is useless for this purpose. The fern is organic; the copy is inorganic.

Does it follow, then, that the fern and the copy have nothing in common? Not so. There are two all-important factors which are common to both. In the first place they possess, though with a difference, a community of material. The material of which the frost-fern is built up is water. The principal constituents of the living fern consist of ingredients which also have been extracted from water, though other inorganic substances have been added. The principal difference between the two is that the constituents of the vegetable fern have been vitalised by the touch of

creative power into organic vegetable tissue. And in the second place, the community of form and beauty which the two so strikingly exhibit, is a guarantee of a community of origin. Though the frost-ferns betray, by the infallible signs which we have just enumerated, how distant is their real relationship to the members of the vegetable kingdom which they so closely resemble in appearance, their conspicuous likenesses of grace and structure are true indications of a common original. It is impossible to observe the close similarities between the two without recognising that the Force which built up the plant molecules into the fern structure must be the same Force as that which compelled the water molecules to arrange themselves into identical combinations. They are both emanations from a single Power.

All which things are an allegory. For the pagan concepts which we have been discussing and the corresponding Judaic beliefs have the same likenesses and the same differences as those which at once unite and sever the frost-fern and the plant-fern. The same likeness in form and material; the same difference in vitality. The pagan concepts are unorganised, inorganic; the Judaic beliefs, vitalised by the quickening touch of revelation, have grown into an organised code. The pagan concepts are the product of the night of human ignorance, and exhale away upon being confronted with that light of revelation, which is life and vitality to the Judaic beliefs. And, lastly, both the pagan concepts and the Judaic beliefs are emanations from one potential source—the Truth.



## CHAPTER IX

### JUDAISM

WE are now in a position to discuss the place which the Judaic Code occupies in the scheme of Religion, and the part which Judaism has played and still plays, not only in the initiation, but also in the perpetuation, of the Christian dispensation. Familiarised as we have become with the spiritual doctrines of Christianity, we might well have supposed, on a superficial view of the case, that the comparatively antiquated doctrines of the Judaic Code are no longer needed. But if it be true that Judaism is to Christianity what the plant is to the animal, then it obviously follows that to suppose that the Religion of Christ can continue its existence without the support which it is continually deriving from Judaism is the same thing as to imagine that the Animal Kingdom can live without the Vegetal Kingdom. Obviously, on theoretical grounds, such a supposition is untenable.

When from this theoretical aspect we turn to consider the matter from the practical point of view, it is not difficult to discover why, in the existing order of things, Christianity must necessarily exhibit this characteristic dependence upon Judaism. It is conceivable that things might have been ordered otherwise than they are. It is conceivable that human beings might have been born into a condition of purity

and spiritual perfection; that man's career might have commenced from the top of the ladder, instead of from the bottom. But things have not been so ordained. The fundamental principle on which the present dispensation is founded is evolution. And the very essence of evolution is to climb. To whatever heights evolution may eventually lead, it always begins at the bottom. First the inorganic, then the organic, then the superorganic. What is wanted at each stage of existence is not the best, but the best-suited. The natural prayer, conscious or unconscious, of every member of the universe is, 'Feed me with food convenient for me.'<sup>1</sup> In all matters we must begin at the beginning. We must learn to walk before we can run.

Applying these principles to the problem before us, we see at once not only that there is room for the Judaic Code between Paganism and Christianity, but also that there is a space between those two terminals which *requires* to be filled up by something, if we are to avoid an intervening vacuum—a thing proverbially abhorrent to Nature. If we were content to remain at the low level of the highest pagan beliefs, or if we were able to start from the high level of the fundamental truths of Christianity, the case might be different. But what we have got to do is to climb from the one to the other. And the Judaic Code is the ladder which Nature and Supernature have provided for the purpose.

To put the case in another way, probably almost every one has at some period or other of his existence asked himself the question, What is the object and the purpose for which we have been placed in the world?

<sup>1</sup> Prov. xxx. 8.

It is one of the great weaknesses of the atheistic creed that it is totally unable even to suggest a reasonable answer to this most imperative question. The young may answer, Pleasure; the sanguine may reply, Happiness; the evolutionist may say, Progress. But a few years' experience of mundane existence is sufficient to convince most of us that peace and happiness are commodities that are not to be bought in this life, and that even the things that are best qualified to gratify altogether fail to satisfy. As Lord Bacon so admirably expresses it, 'We see in all pleasures there is a satiety, and after they be used, their verdure departeth; which showeth well they be but deceits of pleasure, and not pleasures; and that it was the novelty that pleased, and not the quality.'<sup>1</sup> And as for progress, this term is too colourless and vague to furnish any satisfying solution of the problem.

Moreover, even if mundane happiness were less elusive than it is, it would still be open to the fatal objection that it does not last. And as soon as it comes to its inevitable end, the same inexorable question presents itself once more. Assuming that in our lives we succeed in escaping from an ephemeral misery, what purpose is gained by thus acquiring an ephemeral, and therefore valueless, happiness?

But while Philosophy is thus totally unable to suggest any rational explanation of existence, Judaism is instantly ready with an answer which, whether true or untrue, is at least rational and clear, and which, moreover, is supported by the strong recommendation that it exactly fits in with the requirements of the most advanced evolutionary science. According to the Judaic Code the purpose for which a man is placed

<sup>1</sup> *Advancement of Learning*, bk. i.

in this world is to gain one great experience—to realise in a practical manner and for practical purposes the *present-worth* of God-reliance. To that purpose, if Judaism is to be believed, every moment of life should be devoted, and upon that object every thought and effort should be expended. For each man's life is a success or a failure, is utilised or wasted, is gained or lost, in exact proportion as it teaches or fails to teach him that one and only lesson which it is the purpose of Judaism to impart.

It will be remembered that in the chapter on *The Great Dilemma* we admitted, for the sake of argument, that, for the purpose of attaining our immediate objects in life, self-reliance is, or may be, as efficient and effectual a force as God-reliance. It need scarcely be said that that is by no means the view propounded by the Judaic Code. The theme which every contributor to the Old Testament set before himself, as constituting his first and foremost message to mankind, was the unfailing value for mundane purposes of God-reliance, and the worthlessness for those purposes of every other kind of trust. The truth of this assertion is proved by almost every page of the Old Testament; and it is, moreover, strikingly attested by the significant circumstance that the 'prosperity of the ungodly' seemed to the Psalmist a phenomenon which militated so strongly against the doctrine which he was seeking to establish, as to call for a special explanation—as if he felt that whilst it remained unexplained it constituted a note of discord in the harmony of things, a strain almost of monstrosity in the scheme of the universe.

Life may have other and even higher lessons to teach; but they are not the concern of Judaism. In

every sense, no doubt, the spiritual truths of Christianity are higher and nobler and more sublime. Undoubtedly the *future-worth* of God-reliance furnishes a loftier theme, in proportion as a future life is an incomparably more priceless treasure than the mundane existence of which we are now possessed. But these things Judaism passes by with a sublime indifference; not because they do not constitute a higher lesson, but because they are not the *first* lesson of life. As we have seen, all our knowledge of the unseen is based upon our knowledge of the seen. We must learn to think and speak of the visible universe before we can frame a thought, or utter a word, about the invisible. And the prophets and annalists of the Old Testament were acting in true accord with the first principles of Philosophy when they realised and taught that, if we do not learn to trust in God for the concerns of this visible life, we shall end by never learning to trust in Him at all.

This proposition is equally true whether we apply it to the individual or to the race. Religion, as we have seen, acts by means of rewards and punishments. Consequently, at the initiation of Revealed Religion, whether to the race or to the individual, the great thing was, and is, to convince the neophyte of the substantiality of the rewards and punishments to which Religion appeals. Children care little for distant rewards. To them present gratifications outweigh a thousandfold the most flattering promises for the future. If the primitive promoters of Religion had offered to their votaries nothing but remote warnings and far-off promises, they would have preached to deaf ears and unheeding hearts. What was wanted then, and what is wanted still, was and



is something present, substantial, tangible. Even now, after the human race has been familiarised for generations with the idea of a future existence of happiness or misery, experience shows that men are willing to run almost any risk as regards their future life, if they can but gratify their present desires. In the words of the poet,<sup>1</sup>

‘Two magnets, heav’n and earth, allure to bliss;  
The larger loadstone that, the nearer this.  
The weak attraction of the greater fails;  
We nod at times, but neighbourhood prevails.’

Or, to shift the metaphor, there is a perspective in Time as well as in Space, by virtue of which things distant appear smaller and more insignificant than things near at hand.

And this being so, it is obvious that if, in the earlier stages, Religion was to take any hold upon the human race, the first great truth which it was necessary to establish was the present-worth—that is to say, the value for the purposes of this present life—of God-reliance. Before all things else it was essential to convince mankind that the pantheistic theory of life has an immediate and a practical value. It would have been useless in the initial stages to promise far-away delights which no one prized, or to thunder postobital threats which no one heeded. Here and now were the limitations of human desires, and it was therefore necessary that here and now should constitute the horizon of human punishments and human rewards.

The natural history of Religion proves at every turn how fully Religion comprehended these necessities of the case, and how exactly Religion provided for

<sup>1</sup> Dryden.

them. In these, as in all other, respects Religion proved herself a true child of Nature. For when we pass from the pagan concepts, discussed in the last chapter, and proceed to examine the Jewish Religion, we find that the one paramount notion—the first and last idea upon the establishment of which the Judaic Code concentrated all its efforts—is the present-worth of God-reliance. This is the one all-essential doctrine, to which everything else yields precedence—the pivot upon which the whole system turns. The books of the Old Testament, as we have already noticed, fall into two great categories—on the one hand, the doctrinal writings, known as ‘the law and the prophets’; on the other, the books of narrative. And if we study these writings collectively, we cannot fail to observe that there is one consecutive and persistent purpose running through them all. Observe:—

The pantheistic theory of life, that God orders and directs all the events of our present life, contains, as a necessary corollary, the derivative theory of our own absolute and entire dependence upon God for everything. If God controls all events, we must in all things be dependent upon His will. The only chance of happiness and prosperity for us is therefore that, by some means or other, we should learn to subordinate our wills to the divine will; and the first and foremost lesson which it is essential for us to learn is, that we lie under an entire dependence upon the will of God. Hence, the code of Religion must take for its fundamental truth the doctrine of Trust in God. It must rest upon the elementary concept that there is in life a conflict between self-will and God-will; and that the first great problem of Religion is to teach us so to live that life may be a training-

ground on which we may learn to achieve the difficult task of trusting implicitly to God for everything, of subordinating self-will to God-will, of substituting God-reliance for self-reliance.

Accordingly, when we turn to the Jewish Code, we find that this is the one fundamental doctrine which, with an undeviating persistency, permeates from beginning to end all the writings of both the two categories into which the books of the Old Testament fall. While 'the law and the prophets' proclaim this precept with an inexhaustible variety of detail, but an endless monotony of purpose, the narrative books simply furnish a series of vivid pictures in illustration of the doctrine. As regards the law and the prophets, it is scarcely necessary to give any specific illustrations of the fact that this doctrine supplies the *motif* of all the doctrinal books of the Old Testament. It is impossible to open the Bible without instantly meeting it face to face. The Psalms, which contain the quintessence of the Jewish Religion, teem with it. 'Blessed is he that maketh the Lord his trust.'<sup>1</sup> 'Our fathers hoped in Thee: they trusted in Thee, and Thou didst deliver them.'<sup>2</sup> 'Put thou thy trust in the Lord.'<sup>3</sup> 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.'<sup>4</sup> 'He is a shield unto them that trust in Him.'<sup>5</sup> These and innumerable other instances will occur to every one in support of the proposition.

That the design of the narrative portions of the Old Testament is to illustrate by specific instances the same doctrine, will scarcely be disputed. If we analyse

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xl. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xxii. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxvii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Is. xxvi. 3, 4.

<sup>5</sup> Prov. xxx. 5 (R. V.).

these portions of the Bible we find that they are simply a running commentary in concrete form, illustrative of the doctrine thus propounded in the abstract by the law and the prophets. It is scarcely going too far to say that almost every story which these narratives contain is nothing else than an illustration of the certainty with which this doctrine works out in the practical concerns of the present life.

In order to realise as vividly as possible the full force of this assertion, it will be worth while to cite a single instance. For this purpose we cannot do better than select the incomparable narrative of David and Goliath. And we make this selection for two reasons. First, because it would be impossible to find a more perfect illustration of the doctrine. In this respect the incident is without a rival. And secondly, because it so happens that it is possible to prove, by evidence which is absolutely unanswerable, the truthfulness of all the material parts of the narrative. And as the truthfulness of the narrative goes a long way towards proving the truth of the doctrine which the narrative illustrates, the incident possesses a twofold value for our present purpose.

The story in general outline is familiar to every one, but in detail it is not so well known as it deserves; and as much of its force depends upon the dramatic skill with which its details are presented to the reader, it will be useful to quote it here *in extenso*, only premising that, regarded merely as a literary composition of the narrative order, there is nothing finer in the whole range of literature.

‘Now the Philistines gathered together their armies to battle, and Saul and the men of Israel were gathered together and set the battle in array against the

Philistines. And the Philistines stood on a mountain on the one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side: and there was a valley between them.

‘And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam, and his spear’s head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.

‘And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.

‘Now David was the son of Jesse: and the three eldest sons of Jesse went and followed Saul to the battle: but David went and returned from Saul to feed his father’s sheep at Bethlehem. And the Philistine drew near, morning and evening, and presented himself forty days.

‘And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren. And



carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge.

‘ And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.

‘ And David left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren. And as he talked with them, behold there came up the champion (the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name) out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when they saw the man, fled from him, and were sore afraid.

‘ And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father’s house free in Israel. And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

‘ And Eliab, his eldest brother, heard when he spake unto the men: and Eliab’s anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle. And David said, What have

I now done? Is there not a cause? And he turned from him toward another, and spake after the same manner: and the people answered him again after the former manner.

‘And when the words were heard which David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him. And David said to Saul, Let no man’s heart fail because of him: thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine. And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, *The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.* And Saul said unto David, *Go, and the Lord be with thee.*

‘And Saul armed David with his armour, and he put an helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail. And David girded his sword upon his armour, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved it. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him.

‘And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd’s bag which he had, even in a scrip; and

his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on, and drew near unto David; and the man that bear the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: *but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcases of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's and he will give you into our hands.*

‘And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine and slew him.’<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to overestimate the religious value

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel xvii. 1-50,

which attaches to this noble narrative. As a practical illustration of the fundamental doctrine in which the whole of the Old Testament centres, that the secret of success in this life is trust in God, it is unsurpassed. The force with which it succeeds in bringing that lesson home depends, of course, upon the amount of credence which the narrative evokes. The bare assertion of the doctrine may make but little impression upon us. To be told that he who trusts in God is possessed of a talisman which will carry him triumphantly through difficulty and danger may provoke no responsive thrill in the heart of the neophyte. But show him a specific case in which the doctrine has been actually put to the test of practical experience, and in which the talisman has been found to triumph over overwhelming odds, and the shadowy doctrine instantly leaps into vivid reality. Test the case of David and Goliath in this way. Suppose that we had actually been present throughout the whole scene, had heard every word spoken, had watched, with bated breath, the unarmed boy running to meet the mail-clad giant—rushing, as it seemed, according to every human calculation, to absolutely certain death, but destitute of a single qualm of doubt or fear in his unshakable expectation that the Lord who delivered him out of the paw of the lion and out of the paw of the bear would deliver him also out of the hand of the Philistine. And suppose that we had witnessed the triumph of his confidence; had seen the helmet of brass, the coat of mail, the greaves, the brazen target and the beam-like spear, all go down before the shepherd's sling; should we not then have learnt a lesson, branded into heart and brain in letters of fire, and which would leave us only with life itself, that the Lord saveth not with sword and

spear: for the battle of life—yes, and every one of the myriad battles which our lives entail—is the Lord's, and He giveth the victory to whomsoever He will?

But it is perfectly possible even now for every one of us actually to put the doctrine to this very proof. Indeed, it is impossible to read the incomparable narrative before us without doing so. For not only do the vigour and vividness of the description conjure up the whole scene before our eyes, but the narrative carries on its face such indelible imprints of truthfulness, that it is simply impossible not to be convinced that it comes down to us, mediately or immediately, from an eye-witness of the event. Consider the following little touches:—Jesse's injunction to David to take, in addition to the loaves for his brothers, 'ten cheeses for the captain of their thousand'; the leaving of the sheep with a keeper; Eliab's burst of anger at what he considered his younger brother's presumption; his disparaging words 'with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle'; David's explanation to Saul of the incidents of the lion and the bear, as a justification for his apparent temerity in offering to fight the Philistine; the trying on of Saul's armour and David's putting them off again with the remark 'I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them'; his choosing five *smooth* stones out of the brook and putting them in his shepherd's bag; the Philistine's 'looking about' in his disdain of David, and his remark, with reference to David's staff, 'Am I a dog that thou comest to me with staves'; and, finally, the little touch that, when the Philistine arose and came and drew nigh to meet David, David 'hasted and ran



toward the army to meet the Philistine.' All these are just those little touches of truth which simply compel belief. For they force upon us the conviction that the narrative has come from some one who was an eye-witness of the incident. If ever any narrative carried truth on the face of it, it is the narrative before us. If ever it was possible from a written description to reconstruct a scene in past history, it is possible so to reconstruct the incident of David and Goliath. As a piece of word-painting the narrative is a masterpiece. As a sermon upon the fundamental doctrine of the Old Testament Religion, it is probably unequalled, certainly unsurpassed.

But, apart altogether from the internal indications of truthfulness which the narrative thus exhibits, its truth and historical accuracy rest also upon a piece of extrinsic evidence of the highest possible certitude, which places them conclusively above the reach of criticism. This additional piece of evidence consists of an 'undesigned coincidence,' which appears to have hitherto escaped notice, and which therefore furnishes another proof how inexhaustible is the material for study which the Bible presents to the critical student. No book in the world has been so persistently or so carefully studied as the Bible. And yet, after thousands of years of examination and analysis, it still yields to patient inquiry fresh treasures of discovery. Of such a nature is the undesigned coincidence now to be adduced in establishment of the truthfulness, even as regards minute details, of the story which the Bible gives us of David's famous exploit.

For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the argument deducible from undesigned coincidences, it may be well to preface the exposition of the

coincidence now before us, by reminding them that an undesigned coincidence is a coincidence between two separate passages, occurring either in different narratives, or in different parts of one narrative, which not only makes the one passage consistent with the other, but produces this consistency by means of references so recondite and oblique that it is impossible to suppose that the one passage was concocted for the purpose of confirming the other. A coincidence between two passages which directly and obviously brings the one passage into consistency with the other is of no value for evidential purposes as an undesigned coincidence; for such a coincidence *may* have been designedly introduced by its author for the very purpose of making one fictitious passage appear to be consistent with another. The point which gives evidential value to an undesigned coincidence is that it is so subtle and oblique as to be self-evidently undesigned. The distinction between the two kinds of coincidence will be best explained by an illustration; and for this purpose we cannot do better than cite the two illustrations which Paley gives in the opening chapter of his *Horæ Paulinæ*.

‘What St. Paul declares in 1 Cor. xi. concerning the institution of the Eucharist—“For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me”—though it be in close and verbal conformity with the account of the same transaction preserved by St. Luke, is yet a conformity of which no use can be made in our argument; for if it should be objected that this was a mere recital from the Gospel, borrowed by the author of the Epistle, for the purpose of setting off his composition by an appearance of agreement with the received account of the Lord’s Supper, I should not know how to repel the insinuation. But when

I read in the Acts of the Apostles that "when Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, behold a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman *which was a Jewess*"; and when, in an Epistle addressed to Timothy, I find him reminded of his "having known the Holy Scriptures *from a child*," which implies that he must, on one side or both, have been brought up by Jewish parents: I conceive that I remark a coincidence which shews, by its very *obliquity*, that scheme or design was not employed in its formation.'<sup>1</sup>

From this citation, which will sufficiently explain the argument deducible from an 'undesigned coincidence,' turn now to consider the following coincidence.

In the twenty-fifth chapter of the first book of Samuel it is alleged that, some two or three years after his exploit of slaying Goliath, David, having received an affront from a wealthy Israelite named Nabal, set out on a punitive expedition against Nabal for the purpose of executing summary vengeance by putting him and his whole household to the sword. The narrative further alleges that Abigail, Nabal's wife, who is represented to have been a woman of exceptional courage and tact, upon hearing of David's approach at the head of an armed band, set out to meet him, in the hope of pacifying him and diverting his threatened vengeance. On meeting him she is stated to have addressed him in these remarkable words:—

'Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man, Nabal. . . . For the Lord will certainly make my lord (*i.e.* David) a sure house, *because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord*. . . . And though man be risen up to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul, yet the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the

<sup>1</sup> *Horæ Paulinæ: Works of William Paley, D.D.* (1823 Edn.), vol. ii. pp. 115-116.

Lord thy God ; and *the souls of thine enemies, them shall He sling out, as from the hollow of a sling.*'<sup>1</sup>

These words are well worthy of study ; for it is not going too far to say that they prove conclusively the four following propositions :—first, that the interview between Abigail and David actually took place ; second, that at that interview Abigail actually used the words here imputed to her ; third, that the incident of David slaying Goliath with a sling actually occurred ; and fourth, that on the occasion of his encounter with Goliath David publicly imputed his victory over Goliath, not to his own prowess, but to his trust in God.

In the first place, the words thus imputed to Abigail undoubtedly contain an allusion to David's feat of slaying Goliath. The words 'my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord' irresistibly recall the words 'the battle is the Lord's,' imputed to David in the account of the Goliath exploit ;<sup>2</sup> and Abigail's reference to a sling speaks for itself. These allusions, however, are oblique only. There is no direct reference to Goliath, or to his defeat. No one who had not read the Goliath narrative could possibly have guessed from Abigail's words what was the incident to which she was alluding, or even that she was alluding to any particular incident at all. Indeed, so indefinite is the allusion, that a superficial reader, even though he were acquainted with the earlier narrative, would, unless he were on the look out for such covert allusions, be almost certain to overlook it.

Hence the unexplained and indirect allusion thus covertly introduced into the narrative furnishes just the essential element of obliqueness which is required in order to constitute an 'undesigned coincidence.' If

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. xxv. 25-29 (R.V.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii. 47.

the author had been inventing the interview, and had wished to give his account of it an appearance of truth by putting into Abigail's mouth a flattering allusion to David's exploit of slaying Goliath, which had been described eight chapters earlier, it is inconceivable that he would not have inserted in his narrative of the interview words of some sort calculated to draw the reader's attention to the allusion which he was introducing, instead of expressing it in such covert and oblique language that it was almost certain to escape—as, in fact, it has escaped—detection, except by a careful and analytical critic rigorously searching for an undesigned coincidence. Hence the obliqueness of the allusion furnishes the strongest possible evidence that the allusion was not introduced into the narrative by its author for the purpose of making his account of the interview agree with the preceding account of the Goliath incident, so as to give to one or both of these accounts an appearance of truth.

Why, then, was the allusion introduced into the narrative? The only tenable explanation of its presence in the text is to be found in the supposition that both the Goliath incident and the Abigail interview actually took place, exactly as described in the narrative. For this is the only supposition which renders the allusion and its obliqueness intelligible. Suppose that David really fought and defeated Goliath in the manner described, and actually used on that occasion the words which the narrative imputes to him. Suppose, too, that the interview between Abigail and David really took place, and that Abigail was perfectly familiar, as, of course, she must have been, with his exploit and with the words which he had used on that occasion. And, further, suppose that she had



resolved, as in those circumstances would have been only natural, not only to allude to his exploit, but also to deduce from the words which he had used on that occasion an argument—which to him would be the strongest of all arguments, because it was taken from his own lips—why he should abandon his present self-avenging and unworthy project. Then the obliqueness of the allusion, which precludes the supposition of its fraudulent introduction into the narrative for the purpose of deception, becomes the most natural thing in the world. Knowing that David was fully aware of his own exploit and his own words, she would not think it necessary, and if she was a really dexterous advocate, as she is clearly represented to have been, she would not think it wise, to specifically recount facts which she knew were already indelibly imprinted on his memory. To restate them would suggest a necessity for recalling them, as if they were but little known or seldom mentioned. On the other hand, to assume their existence by an indirect reference to them would suggest, what was the fact, that the whole country-side was ringing with them, and that they were the common theme of every one's thoughts and words. Hence an oblique allusion to his famous exploit and to his own well-known words spoken on that occasion was a hundred times more flattering to him than any direct appeal to them could possibly have been. And thus the obliqueness of the allusion imputed to her in the narrative exactly harmonises with the supposition of the truth of the narrative, but is inexplicable on any other supposition. It furnishes the strongest possible evidence that Abigail's interview actually took place as described, and that she really used the words imputed to her.

But if the interview described really took place, and if Abigail really spoke the words attributed to her in the narrative, then it necessarily follows that the exploit to which she alluded must actually have occurred, and that the words which her oblique allusion imputes to David had been actually spoken by him on that occasion. This is no mere arguing in a circle. It is inexorable logic. For it is one of the great merits of the argument based upon an undesigned coincidence that it establishes the truth, not of one only, but of both, of the narratives between which the coincidence occurs. As Paley admirably points out in his exposition of the argument deducible from undesigned coincidences, wherever we find two narratives (or two parts of one narrative), which to any extent harmonise with one another, it is always possible—apart altogether from any undesigned coincidences which they may be found to contain—by assuming the truth of the one, to prove the substantial truth of the other, so far as the harmony extends; or, by assuming the truth of that other, to argue strongly in support of the truth of the one. But the argument deduced from undesigned coincidences assumes the truth of neither the one nor the other. It leaves the reader at liberty to suppose that both narratives are contained in some documents which have been only recently discovered, and which have come to our hands destitute of any extrinsic or collateral evidence whatever. And it shows that the mere comparison of the two together, even in these circumstances, affords good reason to believe that both narratives are true, at all events to the extent of the area which the coincidence covers.

This argument, moreover, has the further merit that

it is conclusive. The presence of an undesigned coincidence *establishes* truth. If both the narratives are fictitious, or if either of them is fictitious, then, either they will not agree at all, or such agreement as they may exhibit must be the result of contrivance and design on the part of the author who has introduced it. To detect a coincidence, and to show that it is of such a nature that it must be undesigned on the part of its author, is to preclude the possibility of untruthfulness in either narrative, so far as the coincidence extends. If the coincidence is there, and if it is really undesigned, it proves the truth of both narratives, and it proves it conclusively.

In the case now before us the coincidence itself is undeniable. And its undesignedness is sufficiently evident, as already pointed out. And, further, the naturalness of the allusion in the mouth of a woman of exceptional tact and ability lends additional and eloquent testimony to its undesignedness. How natural that, in thinking over what she should say to David with a view to appeasing his wrath in the momentous crisis which had arisen, she should determine to make some allusion to the incident which had been the greatest exploit of his life! And what mode of alluding to it could have been more exquisitely dexterous, on her part, or more flattering to him, than her unexplained, but self-explaining, expression of the hope that all David's enemies might be slain as if by a sling—that is to say, as certainly and as swiftly as he had slain Goliath?

A further and still stronger evidence of the undesignedness of the coincidence is the subtlety of the allusion upon which it is based. Though the words attributed to Abigail allude to David's encounter with

Goliath, they express the hope, not that David would sling out his enemies' souls, but that God would do it for him. And thus the words contain an allusion, not merely to David's encounter with the giant, but also to the declaration, which he is represented to have made so repeatedly at the time of the encounter, that it was not he himself who would win the victory, but God Who would win it for him.

And finally, by means of this second allusion David's words are twisted into an argument of extraordinary sagacity. It is not necessary, Abigail is urging, for you to come and take vengeance on my husband; for God will do it for you, just as swiftly and just as unerringly as He guided the stone from your sling to the forehead of Goliath. In this subtle manner she is indirectly and obliquely reminding David of his own words, in which he had disclaimed for himself his impending victory over Goliath, attributing it entirely to God's favour and deliverance. And David's answer, 'Blessed be thy wisdom, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from bloodguiltiness, *and from avenging myself with mine own hand,*' shows that he so understood and accepted her argument. These various traits of obliqueness, covertness, naturalness, and subtlety testify that the coincidence between the two passages was undesigned; and establish with convincing force the truthfulness, not only of the narrative of the interview between Abigail and David, but also of the story of David's encounter with Goliath, to which the various oblique allusions relate. No one, after duly considering both narratives together, can really doubt the reality of the following facts:—first, that David slew Goliath with a sling; and second, that, at the time, he attributed his confident expecta-

tion of victory, not to his own efforts, but to God's favouring help. This conclusion is fairly forced upon us by the premises. No *Higher Criticism*, nor any other kind of criticism, can possibly discredit the veracity of a narrative supported by such subtle evidences of truth as these.

This Judaic doctrine of the present-worth of God-reliance for the purposes of our present life is of such great importance, not only as being the culminating doctrine up to which all the other Judaic doctrines lead, but also as constituting the starting-point of Christianity, as being the essential truth which was designed, when vivified by the touch of Christ's later revelation, to germinate into the higher truth of the Christian Dispensation, that it will be well before we leave it, to remind ourselves of one or two important truths which, from purely philosophic considerations, are deducible from it, and about which, therefore, there cannot be any dispute.

In the first place, it is to be observed that it necessarily follows from what has been said that God-reliance is a force which, if it can be utilised at all, must be utilised, not merely for some, but for all the contingencies that befall us. It follows from the universality of the pantheistic view of life, discussed in the seventh chapter, that God-reliance, being derived from the conception of pantheism, must be equally extensive in its applicability. If we adopt that theory at all, then our practice of God-reliance must be brought into play in every contingency, whether great or small, that life presents to our experience. For the pantheistic and atheistic theories, as we have seen, concur in this, that they will not allow us to trust to ourselves for some things and to God for other things. They



insist that we must trust either to ourselves for everything or to God for everything.

In the next place, it is obvious that God-reliance must necessarily be immeasurably more powerful than any other force whatsoever. The power that created the Universe; the wisdom that directs its movements; the foresight that co-ordinates and harmonises the conflicting forces of nature; the Spirit whose subtle influence orders and controls even the unruly wills and affections of sinful man;—if there be any talisman, or if there be any charm, by which a man may enlist on his side these titanic forces, then we must all agree that the man possessed of that secret will be armed for the battle of life with invincible strength and might irresistible. In this respect it is evident that the enthusiasm with which the Bible regards the potency of this influence is by no means overstated. If God be on our side, who can be against us?

Note next, that there is a peculiarly scientific propriety in Religion's doctrine that the method by which the help of God is to be enlisted on our side is by the exercise of trust in Him. The doctrine of God-reliance regards man as a sort of conduit pipe through which, when he is resolved into a suitable condition of receptivity, the divine influences flow; but from which, unless that condition be assiduously maintained, the divine influences are effectually shut out. And this condition of receptivity is but the scientific name for what Religion calls trust in God. For trust means the opening of the heart to the reception of external influences. The self-reliant man is self-centred; the force which he exercises emanates from within his own natural self. The God-reliant man is God-centred; the force by which his actions are directed and impelled is

absorbed into his being from without. He is acting, it is true, in a very real sense on his own initiative; but that initiative is itself initiated, directed, and controlled, by an extrinsic stimulus.

And finally, it is to be observed that Religion is scientifically correct in postulating humility as the essential element in the mental attitude which is necessary for the cultivation of this faculty of trust in God. There is an unmistakably scientific ring about this part of Religion's doctrine. We know, as already pointed out, that the lower and humbler forms of life possess immensely greater potentialities for responding to the impulses of evolution than the higher and more developed forms; and it is this fact that both justifies and explains Christ's dictum, 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein.'<sup>1</sup>

And here we have to note the undeviating consistency which Religion throughout exhibits in connection with this fundamental element in her scheme. The Old Testament fully endorses this truly scientific doctrine of the New. 'Lord, my heart is not haughty; nor mine eyes lofty. . . . But I refrain my soul, and keep it low, *like as a child* that is weaned from his mother: *yea, my soul is even as a weaned child.*'<sup>2</sup> Here is a direct assertion of the rigorously scientific theory that in order to acquire the faculty of God-reliance (which is the Judaic precursor of what Christ calls 'entering into the kingdom of God') the necessary process is to become as a little child. And that the Psalmist is here making this assertion in respect of the acquisition of the faculty of God-reliance is proved by the fact that in the very next verse he proceeds:

<sup>1</sup> Mark x. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cxxxi. 1, 3.

'O Israel, *trust in the Lord* from this time forth for evermore.'<sup>1</sup>

Reviewing together the foregoing considerations, we see that if only God-reliance be an available force which we may appropriate and utilise for our own purposes, there are four facts concerning it of which we may be absolutely certain. First, that it is available for all contingencies. Second, that it is absolutely trustworthy, because it is immeasurably the most potent of all forces. Third, that the one and only condition on our part, necessary and sufficient for its acquisition, is the condition of simple receptivity. It is to be had for the asking, or not at all. If it is to come to us at all, it must, as Religion so emphatically declares, come as a 'free gift' (χάρισμα).<sup>2</sup> 'Trust in God is not of yourselves: it is the gift of God (Θεοῦ τὸ δῶρον).'<sup>3</sup> And fourth, that the mental attitude through which this condition of receptivity is to be cultivated is, and must be, humility—the antithesis to that haughty self-reliance which closes the avenues of the human heart against the approaches of extrinsic influences. These four conclusions are not problematical. They are four certitudes. For, besides being affirmed by Religion, they are also confirmed by Science. If, therefore, Religion is right in her first and fundamental doctrine, she is right on all the rest. If God-reliance is to be had at all, it comes as a free gift, granted to humility and to nothing else; and when once acquired, it is universal in its application, and irresistible in its force.

The foregoing observations will serve to illustrate, sufficiently for our immediate purpose, the fact that the keynote to the Judaic Religion is the present-worth

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxxxi. 4 (Prayer-book Version).

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 15, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Eph. ii. 8.

of God-reliance—that is to say, the practical value of trust in God, as the motive force of all our actions and conduct in connection with the concerns of this life. The one fundamental truth, which is the very central core of Judaism, reiterated in every line of the Old Testament, preached by ‘the law,’ proclaimed by ‘the prophets,’ illustrated by the books of narrative, is thus the doctrine that the secret of success and happiness in our mundane existence is to be sought and found only in God-reliance. The one object of our life in this world, according to the Judaic Code, is to utilise the experiences that befall us in such a way that they may be daily and hourly saturating us with the consciousness of the unfailing reliability of God-help, and the utter vanity of every other kind of force or influence. ‘O, help us against the enemy, for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do great acts, and it is He that shall tread down our enemies.’<sup>1</sup>

We have dealt thus at length with the incomparable story of David and Goliath, because its establishment as a true narrative is of the last importance to Religion. For in proving the truth of the story we simultaneously prove also the truth of the doctrine which the story illustrates. The human mind is so constituted that it cries aloud for proof. Children are content to take everything on trust. They ask for nothing more than their father’s assurance that this or that is so; and they accept his verdict with unquestioning confidence. But as we begin to think for ourselves, we instinctively begin also to doubt and question. Give us evidence, is the inquisitive petition of every healthy intellect. It is not enough to tell us that God-reliance is an immeasurably more potent

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cviii. 12, 13.

force than self-reliance. Show us an actual case in which trust in God, encountering overwhelming odds, has been tried and has prevailed. Religion cannot, and does not, refuse a response to this most natural appeal. On the green sward of the mountain vale she shows us the youthful shepherd of Bethlehem 'hasting and running' to meet the mail-clad giant. Unequal odds! The weakness of a boy matched against the acme of human strength! Yes, unequal odds indeed! For they were all on the shepherd's side! From the very first the Philistine was doomed. There was not a single chance or possibility in his favour. 'Thou comest to me with a sword and with a spear and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel.' This, according to Judaism, is the secret of victory—the talisman that ensures success. 'Blessed be the Lord, my strength, Who teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight; my hope and my fortress, my castle and deliverer, my defender in Whom I trust.'<sup>1</sup> 'Trust in the Lord alway. For in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.'

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxliv. 1, 2.



## CHAPTER X

### CHRISTIANITY

ZENO, of Elea, the celebrated pupil of Parmenides, and the founder of the Dialectical Method of Philosophy, invented and published a series of what he called *Paradoxes*, by which he sought to prove the unreality of all phenomena—or, at all events, the unreliability of the evidence furnished by the human senses as interpreters of phenomena. The most ingenious and most interesting of Zeno's Paradoxes is that which has been handed down to posterity under the title of *The Paradox of Achilles and the Tortoise*. Achilles, as every one knows, was remarkable for his swiftness of foot. The tortoise, on the other hand, is proverbially slow in its method of progression. Hence, most people would suppose that in a race between the two, Achilles would easily prove the victor. Zeno undertook to prove that, so far is this from being the case, that if in such a race the tortoise should start in front of Achilles, Achilles could never overtake or pass the tortoise.

The method which Zeno employed for the purpose of proving this startling proposition is very ingenious, and is as follows:—

Suppose that Achilles could run ten times as fast as the tortoise, and that the tortoise had a start of one hundred yards. Then, by the time that Achilles

will have run these one hundred yards, the tortoise will have run ten yards, and so will be ten yards in front of Achilles. By the time that Achilles will have run these ten yards, the tortoise will have run one yard, and so will be one yard in front. By the time that Achilles has run this one yard, the tortoise will have run one-tenth of a yard, and so will be one-tenth of a yard in front. By the time that Achilles will have run this one-tenth of a yard, the tortoise will have run one-hundredth of a yard, and so will be one-hundredth of a yard in front. And so on, for ever and ever. Achilles will continually get nearer and nearer to the tortoise, but can never quite catch it up; because each time that he traverses the space which at the moment separates him from the tortoise, the tortoise will have had time to move a little further in front. And thus, even if the process were repeated to infinity, the tortoise would still be found in front—separated from Achilles by a space infinitely small, it is true, but still a little in front.

This celebrated Paradox (which has puzzled not a few even of our modern thinkers) proved such a stumbling-block to Zeno's contemporaries, that they were reduced, for a solution of its difficulties, to the well-known answer *Solvitur ambulando*. It is true, they replied to Zeno, that we can detect no flaw in your reasoning. Evidently, therefore, it is impossible for Achilles, in the conditions supposed, ever to overtake the tortoise. But bring the problem to the test of actual experiment. If one man walks faster than another, we know as a fact that he often does both overtake and pass the slower walker. Although, therefore, we must admit that it is theoretically and logically impossible for the faster walker ever to over-

take the slower, practical experience proves that he can. To all of which Zeno may be presumed to have replied that they were quite mistaken in supposing that one walker can ever overtake another. If such an event ever appears to take place, the appearance must be at once dismissed as delusive and untrue. For a thing cannot be both possible and impossible. Where, therefore, as in the present case, the apparent evidence of our senses comes into conflict with the real evidence of our reason, we must obviously reject the former and accept the latter.

Modern thinkers, in considering this ingenious Paradox, have arrived at a conclusion which is neither that of Zeno nor that of his contemporaries. Needless to say, the logician is ready with a solution of the problem, which freely recognises the reliability of the senses, without impugning the infallibility of Logic. The fact is that Zeno's proposition confounds together two very different things. It assumes that a finite distance divided into an infinite number of divisions is the same thing as an infinite distance. What Zeno is really doing is this: He takes the distance between the starting-point of Achilles and the overtaking-point—which distance happens to be  $111\frac{1}{3}$  yards—and then proceeds to point out that it is (theoretically) possible to divide and subdivide this finite distance into an infinite number of smaller and smaller divisions, without exhausting the whole distance. Up to this point Zeno is, of course, perfectly correct. But when from this true premise he jumps to the untrue conclusion that therefore Achilles can never reach the overtaking-point, he falls into the error of assuming—as he also assumes in some of his other Paradoxes—that because the finite line ( $111\frac{1}{3}$  yards) is infinitely divisible, there-

fore it is infinitely long. His syllogism, in fact, is vitiated by the fallacy technically known to logicians as an *ambiguous middle*. The 'infinity' of his premise is an infinity of division; the 'infinity' of his conclusion is an infinity of distance.

It has been worth while to deal thus at length with Zeno's celebrated Paradox and its solution, because, taken together, they furnish a not inapt illustration of the supreme importance of what we may perhaps call the continuity of effort. In order to utilise it for this purpose, let us convert the paradox into parable. Let Achilles stand for the man of action just starting on his life's career; and let the tortoise stand for success. Of the thousands who yearly enter for this lifelong race, all are divisible into two distinct types. The one, seeing success not far ahead, hastens incontinently to the spot; and though he finds, to his disappointment, that the object of his pursuit has shifted its ground, still he is rewarded by a nearer and clearer view of the glittering prize.

Quick as thought he renews the chase. Success is not where he saw it at first. But he sees it now, tripping invitingly before him, only a little way in advance. Once more, therefore, he readjusts his aim. Once more he starts upon his spasmodic career—only to find once again, when he reaches the spot, that the object of his desire has once more retreated beyond his reach.

And so on, for ever and ever. Each time that success eludes him at one point, he stops and starts off again in a fresh pursuit. And thus his career is a series of stops and starts. Every check in his progress destroys the momentum which his previous efforts had engendered. And, as a consequence of this exhausting

process, each fresh start that he makes is feebler than its predecessors. And so he continues, with waning strength and flagging efforts, the intermittent fever of his career; until at last his capital of spasmodic energy is exhausted, and, worn out by the repeated frustration of his Zenonian hopes, the baffled athlete sinks into Zenonian despair. Success is to him a shifting object, which he can always approach, but never overtake—more elusive than the philosopher's stone to the deluded alchemist—more fleeting than the shores of Italy to the storm-tossed wanderers of Troy.

The runner of the other type scarcely looks at success at all. Content to know the direction in which it lies, he is almost indifferent to either its propinquity or its approach. For the goal at which he aims is not the mere fleeting success of the moment, but is something which lies below the horizon of sight, far away in the dim Beyond. In this single, but lifelong, enterprise he embarks his whole capital of energy. He adjusts every effort towards the attainment of this distant end. *Quodcunque agit respicit finem.* And by this method he escapes that fatal loss of momentum, which is a necessary consequence of spasmodic effort. Travelling with a constantly increasing momentum towards the one persistent object of his life, he incidentally overtakes and captures, with an almost unconscious effort, each unit of success that lies between himself and his goal. And thus, by the very process of pursuing his ultimate end, he gains also a whole host of intermediate ends. What the world calls success and failure are incidents, not issues, to his endeavour. Difficulties to him are pleasing obstacles, which he takes, as it were, in his stride. And even temporary failures are but incidents—regrettable incidents, perhaps; but still, mere inci-



dents—which may retard for a moment, but cannot seriously imperil, the ultimate achievement of his aim.

It will have been observed that the essential distinction between the two views of life here depicted, is that the one, like Zeno, regards life as a thing to be divided up into an infinite number of divisions; and, like Zeno, finds that by this means it is impossible, in the race for success, ever to arrive at any overtaking-point at all. The other looks upon life as a single undivided whole, having one purpose to be constantly kept in view, and one object to be finally achieved. In a word, it preaches the doctrine of the *unification of life*. It finds that this unification of life both requires and induces a corresponding *continuity of effort*. And in this joint doctrine of unification and continuity it discovers the secret of all achievement and all success.

If we analyse these two rival theories of life—the continuous and the spasmodic—in order to discover what are the essential differences which underlie the two, we cannot fail to observe that the theory of continuity is immeasurably superior to the spasmodic theory, not only as a means to attaining its object, by avoiding the loss of momentum which necessarily characterises the latter, but also in respect of the more distant object at which it aims. Everywhere throughout the universe we find that the capacity for aiming at distant objects constitutes a true measure of comparative superiority in the scale of existence. In the vegetable kingdom, and among the humblest members of the animal kingdom, there is practically no capacity for prevision at all. The energies of these lowly organisms are wholly absorbed in the effort to meet the requirements of the passing moment. As we rise in the scale of existence, we meet an increasing

capacity for prevision. Food is stored, nests are built, homes are prepared, all with an obvious regard to future requirements; until the culminating point is reached in man, with his God-like capacity for 'looking before and after.'

But even among the members of the human family, immense differences of degree in this capacity for prevision are observable. Children, and men and women of inferior intellectual power, live exclusively in the present or, at the utmost, in the near future, flitting, butterfly-like, from one present gratification to another. Only, as superior brain-development makes its appearance, do men learn the great lesson of the higher life—

'To scorn delights and live laborious days,'<sup>1</sup>

keeping their purposeful gaze steadfastly fixed upon

'To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow,'<sup>2</sup>

in noble disregard of the fact that such a life is a living sacrifice of to-day. No one can deny that this increasing faculty for prevision marks a corresponding rise in the scale of existence. Its nobility is attested by the fact of its intimate association with success. For this association furnishes an indication that it is a compliance with the laws by which the universe is governed. If experience has shown, time out of mind, that in human life self-abandonment to the immediate gratifications of the moment is a sure precursor of ruin and disaster, whilst the subordination of present desires to the attainment of distant ends inevitably tends to prosperity and success; then, clearly, the thing to be aimed at, if we would rise to the highest life of all, is to find the most distant object of desire,

<sup>1</sup> Milton, *Lycidas*, 72.

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, act v. sc. 5.

and to mould all our efforts and all our actions upon the principle of keeping that object steadfastly in view, constantly pursuing it without break or discontinuity of purpose.

The truth is that the very capacity for desiring a distant object, in preference to an immediate gratification, is a trait of superior nobility of character. The man who is capable of setting before himself, as his purpose in life, the attainment of some end which he cannot possibly hope to achieve in the near future, is self-evidently mapping out for himself a nobler plan of life than that which satisfies the ephemeral longings of the voluptuary and the pleasure-seeker. There are degrees in the horizon of purpose as well as degrees in the horizon of vision. And in either case the faculty of extending that horizon is a characteristic of a higher order of beings. The man who initiates a scheme which will require years, or, perhaps, even his whole lifetime, for its accomplishment, surpasses the shorter-sighted schemer, whose enterprises are limited to to-day, or to-morrow, or the next day. But both are surpassed by the still farther-sighted enthusiast who launches a project which he cannot possibly hope to bring to maturity in his own lifetime, in the confident expectation that it will eventually yield its fruits for the benefit of generations yet unborn.

We see, then, that, other things being equal, remoteness of purpose is a measure of value. Other things being equal, a more distant object is to be preferred to a more immediate end. If the man who lives for to-morrow does well, the man who lives for the next day does better. And in this scale of progressive provision and pre-purpose we cannot stop. Always, other things being equal, increase of remoteness marks in-

crease in value. Always breadth of horizon betokens higher development. And the highest life of all is attained only by him who has learned to live for Eternity.

Here we come in sight of the practical application to our argument of the parable which we have thus been tracing out. Judaism, as we have seen, concerns itself with the affairs of this life. It takes as its fundamental theme the doctrine of trust in God, as formulated by the pantheistic theory of life, and applies that doctrine to the concerns of our present mundane existence. Christianity also seizes upon the same doctrine and appropriates it as the fundamental theme of the Christian Code. But the use which Christianity makes of the doctrine is different from that to which Judaism applies it. Whereas the Judaic Religion adjusts the doctrine of trust in God to the Now, Christianity borrows this mundane application, taking care not to disturb it, and at once proceeds to readjust it, so as to focus it, through the Now, upon the concerns of the Hereafter.

It follows, therefore, that the difference between the Judaic and the Christian treatment of the doctrine is a difference of extension. To Judaism the mundane application of the doctrine is a final end. To Christianity it is a means to a further, ulterior end. Under the Judaic treatment the doctrine exhausts itself; there is nothing more to follow. When Judaism has pointed to a mundane success achieved, or a mundane disaster averted, by an act of trust in God, the story is at an end, the lesson-book is closed. To Christianity, on the other hand, the story at this stage has scarcely begun; the lesson-book is barely opened. For Christianity takes up the parable just where Judaism lays it

down. To Judaism the value of the incident is simply a victory won, or a disaster averted. Christianity cares little for the victory and nothing at all for the disaster. The value to Christianity of the incident is its effect upon the spiritual constitution of the man into whose life it has entered. There its present worth is merged and lost in its future worth. It is because it is an experience which cannot fail to generate in him a fresh fund of confidence in the infallibility of God-reliance; because it is for him an advance along the line of a higher evolution; because it is a step forward on the path of his spiritual development, that Christianity seizes upon the incident and appropriates it as its own. Stated in two words, the distinction between the two attitudes is simply this—Judaism looks *at* the incident; Christianity looks *through* it.

This distinction between ‘at’ and ‘through’ is a distinction of universal application. There are, for the purposes both of Religion and of Philosophy, two ways of regarding all things in this world—one way is to look at them; the other is to look through them. Standing in a room and looking up at the window we may, if we please, focus our eyes upon it; and then we see everything that is on the glass, but we see nothing beyond. Or we may reverse the process and look, not at the window, but through it; and then we see little or nothing of the glass, but we see the sky and the clouds and the sun. In the quaint old words of George Herbert:—

‘A man that looks on glasse,  
On it may stay his eye;  
Or, if he pleaseth, through it passe,  
And then the heav’n espie.’<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Elixir*, 9-12.



Philosophy and Religion concur in the belief that all things in the world are capable of being treated in this dual way. For all things are pervious or impervious to the mental vision of Philosophy, and the spiritual vision of Religion,—are transparent or opaque,—according to the way in which they are regarded. Science, looking at phenomena, discovers in them nothing but the great natural laws of which they are the exponents and the expression. The more piercing vision of Philosophy, peering through the phenomenal into the reality which lies behind it, loses sight of the phenomenal in contemplating the real. The same distinction reappears in Religion. Judaism, focusing its thoughts and interests upon the events of this life, reads in them the grand lesson of trust in God for the purposes of our present existence; but there it ‘stays its eye,’—it sees nothing beyond. Christianity, on the other hand, with deeper insight and more penetrating gaze, looks through the mundane ‘trust’ of Judaism into the other-world ‘trust in Christ’ which lies behind it. To Judaism this world is itself an objective, impervious and opaque. To Christianity it is a transparent window into heaven itself.

Both of these two methods, of *looking at* and *looking through*, have their uses. It is good to look sometimes at the glass of the window. If we did not, we might forget its existence. And the disastrous effect of such forgetting is illustrated by the action of the imprisoned bird, or insect, which dashes itself against the window, in its ignorant attempt to fly out. It is good to look at the phenomenal truths of Science. They feed our thoughts. They enrich our lives. We could not do without them. But Philosophy warns us that if we

would see the real Truth, we must look, not at these phenomenal truths, but through them. We must regard them, not as an objective, but as a means.

And so is it also with Religion. It is good to learn the grand Judaic lesson of trust in God for the concerns of this phenomenal life. It is good to practise that lifelong study, without which life is all lost and thrown away. But Christianity warns us that for the highest purposes of life even this ennobling truth is worthless as an objective. It is but a means to a further end; a 'stepping-stone to higher things'; a window through the temporal into the eternal.

And this brings us straight to the practical interpretation of our parable. Judaism, as compared with Christianity, adopts the Zenonian view of life. Aiming at a present reward and an immediate prize, it cuts life up into a series of fragments by making each separate act of faith an end unto itself. Christianity, on the contrary, careless of worldly success or failure, fixes its all-penetrating gaze upon the one and only object of its faith, sunk though that object be below the horizon of sight, far away in the unfathomable depths of eternity. Of this remote object Christianity never for a moment loses sight. It sees it through every event that befalls. It pursues it without break or discontinuity of purpose. 'This one thing it does, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, it presses on toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.'<sup>1</sup>

And thus, while the faith of Judaism, exercising itself here and there upon the scattered objects of worldly desire, breaks up its energies into a thousand

<sup>1</sup> Phil. iii. 13, 14.

fragmentary struggles, Christianity, travelling direct towards its distant goal, exhibits one prolonged and unbroken persistence of effort. While Judaism divides life up into a series of isolated beginnings and endings, Christianity aims at the unification of life,—a unification so complete that it unites this natural life with the spiritual life that is to be,—so extended that it aims at nothing less than to unify spiritualised man with the spiritual God.

And here it is to be observed incidentally that this programme of unification, which Christianity thus presents to its votaries, more than justifies the noble disregard of present interests which it involves. For just as we saw that the man who aims at a distant success automatically achieves, by virtue of his acquired momentum, a host of intermediate successes, so—and for the same reason—the life which makes heaven its first pursuit unconsciously captures the world as well. There was science as well as theology in Christ's memorable dictum, '*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*'<sup>1</sup>

It will have been noticed that in the foregoing observations we have introduced a distinction between Judaism and Christianity which is new to our argument. Hitherto we have made it our object to demonstrate that the relations of Judaism to Christianity are the relations of plant to animal. In the foregoing chapters we have been endeavouring to establish the formula that what the plant is to the animal, that is Judaism to Christianity. It will at once be recognised that this is a purely scientific formula. Plant and animal are phenomena which

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 33.

belong exclusively to Science. They constitute subjects of scientific research, upon which none but Science has any claim or any power to pronounce an authoritative opinion. When, therefore, we allege that Judaism is to Christianity as the plant is to the animal, we are expressing the relations of Judaism to Christianity solely as regarded from the scientific point of view; and whatever value the formula possesses is a purely scientific value. The formula expresses only the scientific aspect of the relations in question.

But now we are entering upon a new phase of the problem, which presents to our view a fresh aspect of the case, and requires us, therefore, to correspondingly shift our ground. In introducing the subject of eternity we are obviously quitting the domain of Science; for of eternity Science knows nothing. To Philosophy, on the other hand, eternity, as we shall see immediately, is a perfectly familiar term. Indeed Philosophy knows, as we shall endeavour to show in a future chapter,<sup>1</sup> a great deal, not only about eternity itself, but also about the machinery by means of which it is possible to bring time into actual contact with eternity, and to pass from the one category to the other. When, therefore, we assert that Christianity claims the power to unify life by teaching us to live for eternity, and when we propose to consider whether this claim on the part of Christianity is well founded, and whether the means by which Christianity undertakes to perform this task are such as to warrant the belief that Christianity can satisfactorily perform the task thus undertaken, it is evident that we are leaving the domain of Science and are entering the wider realm of Philosophy. From which it follows that we

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xiv, *Time and Eternity*.



are now called upon to contemplate the inter-relations of Judaism and Christianity from the philosophic, as distinguished from the scientific, point of view; and we must, therefore, now bid adieu to Science, and busy ourselves with purely philosophic considerations. In other words, having determined, from the scientific point of view, the inter-relations of Judaism and Christianity, we have now, in order to obtain a more *comprehensive* knowledge of the subject, to shift our ground, and examine those relations from the philosophic standpoint. How far does Philosophy endorse the Christian doctrine of 'living for eternity'?

It will, perhaps, be objected that such a unification of life as that at which Christianity aims, however agreeable it may be to Religion, transcends altogether the limitations of philosophic thought, and possesses, therefore, no practical utility. It is easy to speak glibly of living for eternity. But what do the words import? Is the expression more than an unmeaning phrase? From the most remote point of future time to the nearest point of timelessness is a jump indeed! Can Philosophy manufacture the wings of a Dædalus to transport us across this bridgeless gulf?

The answer to these questions is far more satisfactory than is usually supposed. It is seldom that we realise how far Philosophy can carry us in the direction of the eternal. We habitually think and speak as if the terms 'God' and 'eternity' were the exclusive property of Religion. But is this really the case? Has Philosophy no place for these terms in her vocabulary? Or does the philosopher possess no patent, no formula, which can assist in the solution of Religion's last and noblest problem, how to link time to eternity? A little consideration of these questions will be sufficient



to satisfy us that not only is the conception of an Infinite and Eternal God an idea with which Philosophy is perfectly familiar, but also that the reality of the existence of such a God is to Philosophy the most certain of all facts. And further, that the complete unification of life by unifying man with the Eternal God, so far from being an unphilosophic notion, is, in fact, the one and only object which the philosopher keeps constantly and steadily before him as the goal to which all philosophic thought and effort is directed.

With a view to establishing these propositions let us pursue a little further our study of the philosophic doctrine of unification. Hitherto we have been considering that doctrine in its relation to life. We have seen that in this connection the highest life, from the point of view both of Philosophy and of Christianity, is that which unifies itself by concentrating its aim and purpose upon one distant object, lying beyond the term of this mundane existence, and outside the boundaries of this temporal world. A life so unified is recognised by Philosophy as the highest life of all. It is known also to Religion, who calls it 'life eternal.'

Now, eternal life has been defined by Christ as *knowledge* of God. 'This is life eternal, that they should *know* Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'<sup>1</sup> Let us, then, turn for a moment from the contemplation of the unification of life to consider the unification of knowledge. What does the philosopher mean when he speaks of 'unifying knowledge'? And does Philosophy possess any 'knowledge' which at all corresponds to what Religion means by the formula 'to know God'?

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 3.

In his *Synthetic Philosophy* the late Mr. Herbert Spencer demonstrates that the purpose and object of Philosophy is to unify all phenomena. The object which each of the Sciences sets before itself is to ascertain the laws which govern the phenomena with which that particular Science deals. Thus Astronomy concerns itself with discovering the laws which regulate the movements and constitutions of the heavenly bodies. Morphology traces out the laws which determine the shapes and structures of plants and animals. Sociology investigates the laws which govern what Spencer calls 'the social organism.' And so on. Each Science partially unifies knowledge by showing that the phenomena which fall within its scope are all products of certain natural laws. It occupies itself in demonstrating that its phenomena are not isolated independent facts, but are various expressions of certain laws which are relatively few in number.

But these partial unifications of our knowledge of phenomena by no means satisfy the requirements of Philosophy. Philosophy is 'the Science of Sciences.' When each Science has performed its appointed task of formulating the relatively few laws which it has discovered, Philosophy takes all these laws and proceeds to show that they, in their turn, are themselves resolvable into still fewer laws—in fact, into one single law. And thus Philosophy begins where the Sciences end. It is the province of Philosophy to reduce all the generalisations of all the Sciences into one grand generalisation, by demonstrating that all phenomena and all laws are products of one Supreme Fact, which is the Cause and the Author of them all. This ultimate unification of all phenomena is the aim and object of Philosophy. When this unification has been effected,

then, but not till then, the goal of Philosophy has been reached.

What is this Supreme Fact which thus underlies all phenomena, and of which all phenomena are but different expressions or manifestations? Spencer defines it as 'a Power of which no limit in Time or Space can be conceived.'<sup>1</sup> It is Eternal—'no limit in time'; and it is Infinite—'no limit in space.' And, further, the reality of the existence of this Eternal Infinite Power is free from all taint of doubt or suspicion. Into this question the elements of speculation or conjecture cannot enter; for it is the most certain of all facts known to Philosophy. Whatever else in the Universe may be uncertain, of this one fact we may be sure; for it is a reality which transcends demonstration by underlying it.

'Though the Absolute cannot in any manner or degree be known, in the strict sense of knowing, yet we find that its positive existence is a necessary datum of consciousness; that so long as consciousness continues, we cannot for an instant rid it of this datum; and that thus the belief which this datum constitutes, has a higher warrant than any other whatever.'<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the due recognition and realisation of the existence of this Eternal Being is a necessary condition—or, rather, *the* necessary condition—to that unification of all our knowledge of phenomena which, as we have just seen, is the aim and end of Philosophy. For in that Being, and in that Being alone, are all things unified.

'The recognition of a persistent Force, ever changing its manifestations, but unchanged in quantity, throughout all past time and all future time, is that which we find alone makes possible each concrete interpretation, *and at last unifies all concrete interpretations.*'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *First Principles*, p. 551 (5th Edn.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 552.

We shall discuss more fully in a future chapter<sup>1</sup> the exact meaning which Religion and Philosophy respectively attach to the term 'eternity,' and we shall there not only endeavour to show by particular proofs that Religion and Philosophy are both agreed that there is a method by which it is possible to pass from time to eternity, but we shall also attempt to demonstrate what that method is. Here it is sufficient for our immediate purpose to accept 'without limit in time or space' as a rough-and-ready working definition, furnished by Philosophy, which at least includes, if it does not precisely define, eternity; and to note that in the eyes of Philosophy the following statements are true: first, that the most certain of all facts is the existence of an Absolute Being unlimited in time or space; second, that in acknowledging the existence of this Absolute Being Philosophy clearly recognises the existence of that Infinite Being Whom Religion worships as the Eternal God; third, that the sole aim of Philosophy is to unify our knowledge of all phenomena by reducing them into terms of this Absolute Power; and fourth, that only as and when phenomena merge and resolve themselves into this Eternal Being does that condition of Oneness arise, at which Philosophy aims.

With the doctrines thus propounded by Philosophy with reference to this question of unification, compare now the views expressed by Religion upon the same subject. Here it is to be observed that the central doctrine of all Revealed Religion, both Judaic and Christian, is known as the Atonement—or, as it is now the fashion to pronounce the word in order to emphasise its philological derivation, the At-one-ment. In this term is summed up the doctrine that the

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xiv, *Time and Eternity*.



practical object of Religion is to bring her votaries into *union* with the Deity—to resolve them into that condition, physical, intellectual, and emotional, which will enable them to realise, for practical purposes and in a practical way, their *oneness* with that transcendent Reality, which, as we have just seen, is, according to Philosophy, no less than according to Religion, the Cause and the Author of all things. And this atonement, it is scarcely necessary to add, Christianity attributes solely to Christ. ‘We rejoice in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom we have now received the Atonement.’<sup>1</sup>

Now, Philosophy, as we have just seen, is *completely unified knowledge*; and the object of all philosophical study and research is to effect the *unification* of all things. Unification with what? Where is the goal which the philosopher has in view when he addresses himself to the task of running the race which Philosophy sets before him? The answer to this question brings Philosophy into curiously complete unity with Religion. Philosophy, says Herbert Spencer, is completely unified knowledge. The purpose of the philosopher is to reduce all phenomena—himself included—into terms of the One Great Unknown. His object is to demonstrate that all perceptible things are but various expressions of that one solitary Reality which lies behind them all. And this purpose holds good in every department of philosophic research. Just as the Astronomer, in tracing out the past history of the physical Universe, is, in fact, reducing the phenomena which he is studying into unison with those expressions of the Eternal Being which are termed Physical Laws; so the student of Ethics is in

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 11.



reality merely tracing out those rules of right conduct, the observance of which will bring his actions into unison with those expressions of the Eternal Being which are called Moral Laws. And thus the objects of Religion and Philosophy are identical. By whatever name we may express it—whether we call it Unification, or Correspondence, or Communion, or Atonement—the highest and ultimate object is in either case the same. Unification is the first and last word in the vocabulary of Philosophy. At-one-ment is the Alpha and Omega of Religion.

It is clear, therefore, that the unification of knowledge prescribed by Philosophy is nothing else than that 'knowledge of God' at which Christianity aims. However imperfectly Philosophy may perform its self-allotted task, the goal which it strives to reach is identical with that of Christianity. The object, therefore, which Christianity sets before itself is, from the philosophic point of view, perfectly legitimate. Whatever other objections may be taken to the programme of Christianity, it is certain that it cannot be impugned as unphilosophic.

These things being so, it at once becomes obvious that Philosophy is in full accord with Religion as to the possibility of—and, indeed, the necessity for—a linking of time to eternity. In recognising as 'the most certain of all facts' the existence of a Persistent Force, unlimited in time or space, Philosophy clearly recognises the existence of that Eternal Power Whom Religion calls God. However widely Philosophy may differ from Religion as to the attributes to be ascribed to this transcendent Power, both agree in formulating eternity as one of those attributes. In recognising, again, the fact that all phenomena

are but various manifestations of this timeless Being, Philosophy, by necessary implication, recognises also that there is a relation between the temporal and the eternal; and, consequently, that there must be some means by which the two are connected together. Up to this point Philosophy takes us by the hand and leads us to the very verge of eternity. But here she stops. She will not—she cannot—help us a single step further in this direction.

Now, it is just at this point that the Christian Religion comes to our aid. For it is precisely at this juncture that the second act of revelation made its appearance. And it is observable that this act of divine intervention, like that earlier act of creation (of which it is the psychical homologue), by which animal life was introduced into the physical sphere, came as a matter of necessity. For it was impossible that the new and supernatural knowledge, which was to impart to humanity the secret of linking time to eternity, by unifying man with God, could come in any other way than by revelation. It is easy to see, when once Philosophy has pointed it out, that man himself is but an expression of the Eternal Power which underlies all things, and which expresses itself in all things. For it is a statement as true to Philosophy as it is to Religion that all things are but various expressions of an all-immanent Deity; and one of the profoundest truths that has ever been uttered is that which declares the relations of God to the four great orders of His creatures by asserting that God sleeps in the mineral, dreams in the vegetable, awakes in the animal, and reveals Himself in man. If, then, we are prepared to be satisfied with such a unification of man with God as that which Philosophy can supply—if, in other

words, unification means nothing more than Philosophy means by the word—it is easy, in this sense and to this extent, to unify man with God.

But for human purposes and human needs such a unification is worthless. It yields us nothing but a deaf-and-dumb correspondence—relation, in place of relationship; community, where we need communion. The truth is that the philosophical method of unification is good enough for all phenomena except man. It is good enough even for man himself, if man be content to be classed with purely natural phenomena. Within these limitations Philosophy can unify all things, and can unify them effectually. And it is not the fault of Philosophy if man insists on climbing out of the natural into the supernatural sphere, and declines to accept the voice of Philosophy as a final answer to his unsatisfied longings.

But the considerations discussed at the opening of this chapter introduce an indefinite extension of the horizon of human requirements. The man who has grasped the full significance of the ultimate conclusion deducible from Zeno's paradox refuses to submit to the limitations imposed by the boundaries of philosophic thought.

'Æstuat infelix angusto limite mundi.'<sup>1</sup>

His awakened spirit chafes at the narrow limits of the world and the world's desires. His aspirations are not to be checked or confined by the frozen heights of nescience. His desires refuse to be bounded by the icy barriers of the Unknown. In spite of Nature and Nature's limitations he bursts his way through all opposing obstacles.

'Diducit scopulos et montem rumpit aceto.'<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Juvenal, *Satire* x. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

To what purpose are his noblest aspirations of thought and emotion, if Philosophy, the arch-magician, can satisfy them only by laying them to rest, like some troubled spirit, in the barren silence of the grave? If this be the final outcome of human intelligence, let Science bring no more such vain oblations! What profit is it to preach to tingling ears that man is a fragment of the Incomprehensible, or to trace back his sublime pedigree to an Unknown God? Shall Philosophy confer upon him the patent of a divine nobility, and then forbid him to exercise its privileges? Shall Science hand over to him the title-deeds to a celestial inheritance, and then declare that the estate is not to be enjoyed?

In vivid contrast with the lifeless and barren unification thus formulated by Philosophy, the life-giving At-one-ment propounded by Christ stands out in bold relief. The unification between God and man which He offers is that quickening union which imparts vitality—the oneness of the vine with its branches—the relationship of the parent to the child. ‘I and My Father are One.’<sup>1</sup> ‘Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in Me.’<sup>2</sup> ‘That they all *may be one*, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, *that they also may be one in Us*. . . I in them, and Thou in Me, *that they may be made perfect in one*.’<sup>3</sup>

From these words of Christ it is clear not only that Christianity preaches the doctrine of unifying life by keeping constantly before us, as our one and only object of pursuit, a distant prize lying far away in remote eternity, but also that Christianity holds out the promise that this unification of life will eventually

<sup>1</sup> John x. 30.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, xv. 4.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii. 21, 23.



lead us into a perfect oneness with God,—a oneness which will introduce us into the same vital relationship with God as that which exists between the vine and its branches. It follows, however, from what has been said in previous chapters with regard to the comprehensiveness of knowledge, that Christianity, standing alone, is incapable of fulfilling this promise, or, at all events, of fulfilling it to the highest attainable degree; and in the next chapter we shall endeavour to show how this purpose, impossible to Christianity alone, may be effected by fusing Judaism with Christianity, and what is the nature of the assistance in relation to the problem of linking time to eternity which Christianity derives from that fusion. We shall also, in a later chapter,<sup>1</sup> consider exactly what is the machinery by means of which this unification of time with eternity, and the consequent acquisition of eternal life, is to be effected. Here, before proceeding to these further steps in our argument, let us glance for a moment at two corollaries which result from what has just been said.

In the first place, it is to be observed that the doctrines both of Philosophy and of Christianity relative to knowledge fall into line with their corresponding beliefs concerning life. In either case unification is the key to perfection. The philosophic idea of the highest knowledge is unified knowledge,—knowledge which has learnt to express itself in terms of the one great central fact of the Universe. The philosopher's idea, again, of the highest life is unified life,—a life which sets before it, as its one and only purpose, one distant object to be constantly pursued. And in these views Christianity heartily concurs. The Christian

<sup>1</sup> Chapter xiv, *Time and Eternity*.

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conception of the highest knowledge is to know only one thing, the one great central fact of Christianity, in which all other things merge and disappear,—‘not to know anything, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.’<sup>1</sup> The Christian’s conception of the highest life is to pursue only one distant object which absorbs and obliterates everything else,—‘this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus.’<sup>2</sup> And lest there should be any doubt that this goal, for the attainment of which the Christian life unifies all its energies, is to be reached in a future and higher existence and in another world, Christianity identifies it as ‘the prize of an *upward* calling in Christ Jesus.’ For what is this ‘upward’ (ἄνω) but an echo of Christ’s own ‘from above’ (ἐκ τῶν ἄνω)—‘Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world’?<sup>3</sup>

And in the second place, the foregoing observations show exactly what are the inter-relations of Science, Judaism, Philosophy, and Christianity, in connection with the two great categories known as Time and Eternity. Science ranges through the whole realm of time, but sees and knows nothing beyond. Judaism and Philosophy lead us, with equal certainty of conviction, though by different routes, through the region of time up to the verge of eternity. Here they stop. Both recognise the fact of an Eternal Being. Both believe that there is a relation, potentially admitting of unification, between the temporal and the eternal. But the way of this unification is hidden from both.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 2.<sup>2</sup> Phil. iii. 13, 14.<sup>3</sup> John viii. 23.

Science stops at the verge of eternity, because the boundaries of Nature are the bounds of scientific thought. The rest is Supernature, and therefore to Science unknown and unknowable. Judaism stops, because eternity is the Promised Land, into which Judaism, like the great founder of the Judaic Code, may not enter. Philosophy stops because, though satisfied of the existence and reality of an eternal Power of which man is both an expression and a manifestation, and with which, therefore, there must be some way of unifying man, it knows not how such unification is to be effected. At this point, therefore, Christianity comes upon the scene, with the second act of revelation, demonstrating the Way to eternal life, thereby supplying the missing link between time and eternity.

Eternity! Yes; but what a word! How easy to utter! How difficult to conceive! How familiar to the dogmatic theorist of Theology! How inaccessible to the fact-ridden votary of Science! Yet, as we have seen, this remote conception, though strange to Science, is no stranger to Philosophy. In working out his essential process of unifying phenomena, the philosopher has stumbled upon a truth, as certain as it was unforeseen. The search for a true method of unifying temporal phenomena has been rewarded by an unexpected glimpse of the eternal. For a philosophic analysis of the laws and conditions of thought has disclosed the fact that the whole process of thought consists of relation. We cannot think of anything except by relating it to its complement. White is white only by being compared with the not-white. And even truth itself is inconceivable except by being contrasted with the untrue.

From this it follows that if there were only one thing in existence, we could not think of it at all. And hence we are compelled to believe in the reality of that which we find to be a necessary datum of consciousness. 'In the very assertion that all our knowledge, properly so-called, is Relative, there is involved the assertion that there exists a real Non-relative,'<sup>1</sup> as the necessary complement of the Relative. For 'the Relative is itself inconceivable, except as related to a real Non-relative or Absolute.'<sup>2</sup> And thus we have the highest of all warrants for believing in the actual existence of that Absolute, in the absence of which we could not think of the Relative at all.

So, too, with the phenomena of Time. Our very consciousness of the temporal establishes the existence of an eternal. And thus, in seeking through this extended range of inquiry for the materials for the unification of phenomena, Philosophy has, half-unconsciously, advanced her outposts close up to the confines of the timeless shore. The searchlight of philosophic investigation, when carried to the most remote boundaries of thought, reveals the fact that even in these dark and intractable regions the vapours of doubt and uncertainty still retain the normal flashing-points which are characteristic of them elsewhere. Introduce the spark of knowledge, and a discharge takes place, which to some extent lifts and disperses the heavy atmosphere of mystery. And then, as we peer through the resulting rifts, we become conscious that eternity itself is looming into sight.

Thus we see that though the philosopher cannot unify the temporal with the eternal in any sort or manner that will at all satisfy the higher requirements

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*, p. 96 (5th Edn.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

of humanity, he has nevertheless succeeded in furnishing one all-important contribution to the solution of the problem—he has demonstrated, beyond the possibility of doubt or question, that there *is* an Eternal Absolute Being, in Whom all things, including man himself, are capable of being unified, if only some one will show the way. And here Christianity takes up the tale just where Philosophy closes the book, with Christ's monumental answer—'I am the Way.'<sup>1</sup>

What, then, are the philosophic, as distinguished from the scientific, inter-relations of Judaism and Christianity? The answer to this question is that, as regarded from the philosophic point of view, Judaism is the Religion of this world; Christianity, the Religion of the other world. Judaism is 'from beneath'—the Religion of Nature; Christianity, 'from above'—the Religion of Supernature. Judaism is the Religion of time; Christianity, the Religion of eternity.

Such being the respective provinces of Judaism and Christianity, and the places which, as regarded from the philosophic point of view, they respectively occupy in the anatomy of Truth, we have next to consider what are the reasons, scientific and philosophic as well as religious, why neither Judaism nor Christianity, standing alone, can confer on any human being the gift of eternal life, and what will be the effect, for this purpose, of fusing their respective forces together into a single force; and what is the function which their joint product, when so amalgamated, will perform in relation to this, the supreme problem of existence.

<sup>1</sup> John xiv. 6.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE FUSION OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

THE first step in the inquiry indicated at the close of the last chapter is to look for yet further evidence in support and illustration of the proposition, upon which we have so repeatedly insisted, that Christianity is not a separate and independent Religion, but is the product of a new germ of Truth infused into the old truths of Judaism, and is consequently dependent upon Judaism, not only for its origination, but also for its continuance and maintenance. Already we have adduced in support of this proposition Christ's emphatic declaration that He came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, the Law and the Prophets; and that those venerable mandates to humanity are destined to retain both their integrity and their authority till heaven and earth pass away.

But the fact of the dependence of Christianity upon the Law and the Prophets, the exact nature of that dependence, and the reason for its existence, are points of such vital importance, not only to our immediate argument, but also to a clear understanding of the anatomical relations of the two Testaments to one another in the structure of Truth, that it is necessary to pursue the matter a little further.

In looking for this required additional evidence of the dependence of Christianity upon Judaism, we must,



of course, bear in mind that upon this question we are both entitled and bound to accept Christ's *ipse dixit* as a sufficient and conclusive authority. Apart, altogether, from the weight which attaches to His divinity and consequent infallibility, He, as the Founder of the new Order of Religion, is entitled to lay down the laws and conditions of its constitution; and from His ruling upon these matters there is not, and, in the nature of things, cannot be, any appeal. Any objections that may be raised to the views expressed in the foregoing pages as to the inter-relations of Judaism and Christianity disappear if and so far as it can be shown that those views are supported by the authority of Christ Himself. It is, therefore, highly satisfactory to note that Christ has declared, with a special emphasis, that Christianity cannot afford to dispense with the Judaic truths. Let us verify this assertion.

In the thirteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel is contained the well-known series of parables upon what Christ calls 'the kingdom of heaven,' which introduce some of the most vital, as well as the most novel, of the truths which are included in the new revelation. At the conclusion of those parables Christ asked His disciples, 'Have ye understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yea. And He said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.'<sup>1</sup> What, in this somewhat obscure passage, are the 'things new and old'? And what is the point of the comparison of a 'disciple of the kingdom of heaven' to a 'householder who brings forth things new and old'?

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiii. 51, 52.

The intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament which Christ's teaching everywhere displays, as well as His own express unification of His Religion with Judaism, compels the inference that, when He spoke of 'a householder who *brings forth out of his treasure things new and old*,' He had in mind Leviticus xxvi. 9, 10:—

'I will . . . make you fruitful, and multiply you. . . . And ye shall eat old store, and *bring forth the old because of* (or, 'from before,' R.V., marginal rendering) *the new*.'

This passage in Leviticus occurs in the middle of a list of blessings which are promised as rewards for obedience to God's commands. The meaning of 'bringing forth the old from before the new' is explained in the preceding chapter:—

'3. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; 4. But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. 20. And if ye shall say, What shall we eat the seventh year? behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase: 21. Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. 22. And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store.'

So, 'ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old from before the new' means 'you shall have such abundance that your supply will more than keep pace with your consumption. You shall have in hand enough of the old to enable you to store the new.'

This being so, what, now, is the meaning of Christ's words? Obviously, the expression 'every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven' means every student in the school of Religion who

has completely mastered the lessons which Religion has to teach about that new and highest truth which Christ had just introduced under the name of 'the kingdom of heaven.' And the statement that such a student 'is like unto a man that is a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old,' means that he will be rewarded with such a wealth of divine knowledge that he, too, like the householder in Leviticus, shall have a store (*θησαυρὸς*) of things new and old. Just as the husbandman was promised such an abundance that he would be able to store both the old and the new, so the perfect disciple would possess a store of things new and old.

But at this point Christ's words draw an all-important distinction between the two cases. The husbandman was to 'bring forth the old *from before the new*'—that is, 'in order that he might store up the new.' He was not to bring forth both the old and the new together. In his case the very object of bringing forth the old was that he might store up the new. The perfect disciple of the kingdom of heaven, on the other hand, is like a householder who, having already stored both the new and the old, brings forth both together. What is the meaning of this distinction? In order to understand it we must inquire what are the 'things new and old' (*καινὰ καὶ παλαιά*).

The answer to this question is irresistibly suggested by a glance at the Bible itself. The Bible is Religion's storehouse (*θησαυρὸς*) of knowledge. And it consists of two parts, the New Testament (*ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη*—Christ's very word, *καινά*), and the Old Testament (*ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη*—again, Christ's very word, *παλαιά*). The 'things new' (*καινὰ*) are the novel truths which Christ was teaching, and which were shortly to be stored up

in the treasury of the New Testament (ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη). The 'things old' (παλαιὰ) are the old time-honoured truths which had long ago been stored up in the treasure-house of the Jewish scriptures (ἡ παλαιὰ διαθήκη).

The inference thus irresistibly thrust upon us by the words καινὰ (new) and παλαιὰ (old), which distinguish the New Testament and the Old respectively, is absolutely confirmed when we come to examine the passage with any critical care. Christ has just been propounding, in the immediately preceding seven parables, certain perfectly *novel* (καινὰ) doctrines concerning the 'kingdom of heaven.' Having concluded those parables, He asks His disciples whether they have understood what He has been saying. On receiving in reply their ready affirmative, He proceeds to correct a misapprehension into which they might easily have fallen, by warning them that they are not to suppose that in the understanding of these novel doctrines is contained the whole treasure of Religion. These newly disclosed truths which He has just been declaring, not only do not constitute the whole code of Religion, but are not in any way to displace or over-ride the old (παλαιὰ) truths of the Jewish Religion. On the contrary, the new and the old constitute two parts of a single whole. They are to live and flourish together. The new is something grafted by a new revelation on to the old; and consequently no disciple of the kingdom of heaven will have become a perfect student in the school of theology until he shall have learnt how the new truths fit into the old; so that, like—and yet unlike—the prosperous householder of the Jewish dispensation, he may bring forth out of his treasure-house the new and the old together.



The soundness of the foregoing interpretation of Christ's words is still further confirmed by the fact that He propounds, though in totally different terms, the very same lesson in another passage, which at the same time explains what Christ meant by '*bringing forth* out of his treasure.' In the Sermon on the Mount, which was addressed to His 'disciples,' after declaring a series of novel doctrines, Christ intimates to His disciples that these doctrines were given to them, not merely for their own exclusive benefit that they might thenceforth form part of their own 'treasure,' but in order that they might publish them to the world for the benefit of others—in other words, in order that they might '*bring them forth out of their treasure.*' This duty He there enjoins in these words:—'Ye are the light of the world. . . . Men do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on the stand; and it giveth light to all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father Which is in heaven.'<sup>1</sup>

And then, having said this, He immediately proceeds, in the words which we have already cited in previous chapters, to correct the very same misunderstanding as that which we have just been discussing, and to which His preceding words might otherwise have given rise, namely, that they were not to suppose that the novel doctrines which He had just been propounding were to constitute a complete code of Religion, or were to oust the old Jewish law:—'Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil (*πληρῶσαι*). For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 14-16.



one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.<sup>1</sup>

Here is an express assertion, in clear and unambiguous language, that the truths of Christianity were not to stand alone, apart from the Jewish code; but that they were to be a completing of that code. This proposition is admirably expressed by the word 'fulfil' (*πληρῶσαι*). For this word implies that the Jewish Code, contained in the Old Testament, did not fill completely the whole sphere of Religion. By them Religion's treasure-house was only half full—indeed, not half full. And the new truths of Christianity which Christ was now revealing were intended, not to destroy or oust the old truths of Judaism—all of which were destined to survive as long as heaven and earth shall remain; but to 'fulfil'—that is, fill full—the space in the treasure-house of Religion which the old truths of Judaism still left vacant.

It is clear, therefore, beyond dispute, that the doctrine that Christianity and Judaism are inseparably connected together as parts of a single whole is emphatically asserted by Christ Himself. If there had been any room for doubt as to the meaning of His words in either of the two passages just cited, it is impossible to question an assertion made by Him on two occasions, and expressed on either occasion in totally different language. And thus it is evident that, in Christ's view, Christianity was an adjunct to Judaism. The mysterious link which for two thousand years has bound the New Testament to the Old is no mere figment of accident or caprice. It is a link which was forged in Nature's workshop. It is a part of the anatomy of Religion's innermost being. It is the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 17, 18.

creature of a natural law, as fixed and steadfast as the law of gravitation; and which, like the law of gravitation, will remain 'till heaven and earth shall pass away.'

And now observe with what force these utterances of Christ confirm the views which have been advanced in the foregoing pages as to the true relation of the New Testament to the Old. As long as we persist in regarding the truths of Christianity as something separate, or even separable, from the truths of Judaism, we are setting at nought one of the plainest injunctions of Christ Himself. We are reversing the Master's words. We are insisting that He came not to fulfil, but to destroy. As long as we maintain—be it only in thought, or even in thoughtlessness—the heresy that the Old Testament has been displaced in the smallest degree by the Religion of the New, we are unlearning the test of true discipleship—'to bring forth out of his treasure things new *and old*.' And if so, then it is certain that in Christ's view the Jewish Religion was something more than a matrix into which to inject the initial germ of the Christian revelation. Its continued existence and its constant use—'*bring forth* out of His treasure'—was a condition precedent to the maintenance of the newer and more refined truths, just as the continued existence and constant use of the plant-kingdom is necessary for the aliment of animal life.

Such being the inter-relations of Judaism and Christianity, it becomes easy to understand what are the parts which Judaism and Christianity respectively take in the process of the acquisition of eternal life, and why it is necessary that the two should co-operate together. Christianity, as we have seen, offers us

eternal life by unifying man with God. How is this unification to be effected? By faith. Of the many passages which might be cited in support of this proposition, one will here suffice:—‘Fight the good fight of *faith*; *lay hold on* eternal life.’<sup>1</sup> In this passage observe particularly the words ‘lay hold on’ (ἐπιλαβοῦ); and note the fact that these words follow immediately after the word ‘faith.’ For this juxta-position has a meaning. It signifies that faith is the organ by which to lay hold on eternal life;—in other words, that the kind of faith that is required for the acquisition of eternal life is a faith that can ‘lay hold,’ or ‘grasp.’

Now, we saw in the third chapter, when discussing the structure of Knowledge, that knowledge is of two orders. Knowledge of the first order consists in apprehension. It is practically limited to the perception of the existence of the object under inquiry; and it is acquired by touching that object in respect of one only of its dimensions. Knowledge of this order is, therefore, a knowledge of one dimension.

Knowledge of the second order consists in comprehending or grasping the attributes of the object under investigation; and it is acquired by touching that object in respect of two or more of its dimensions simultaneously, thereby disclosing the relations which exist between the dimensions so simultaneously touched. Knowledge of this order is, therefore, a knowledge of two or more dimensions. This is the only kind of knowledge to which in strictness the term ‘knowledge’ can properly be applied. Knowledge of the first order is, as we have seen, more properly called ‘apprehension’ or ‘perception.’ Knowledge of the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. vi. 12.

second order—knowledge properly so called—is ‘comprehension.’

Now, Religion defines eternal life as *knowledge* of God and Christ—‘this is life eternal, that they should *know* Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.’<sup>1</sup> And to know, as we have just seen, is to grasp or lay hold, as distinguished from merely touching. When, therefore, the Apostle exclaims, ‘Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life,’ he is, in effect, declaring that the faith which is required for the acquisition of eternal life is a faith of knowledge or comprehension, as distinguished from a faith of mere touching, or apprehension. It must be a faith which belongs to the second order of Knowledge, and deals simultaneously with two or more dimensions.

Now, the faith of the Judaic dispensation, as we have seen, regards things only from the point of view of this mundane existence. It is ‘from beneath.’ It is ‘of this world.’ It approaches God from that one side only. It is, therefore, a faith of one dimension—a faith belonging to the first order of knowledge. The faith of Christianity, again, regards things exclusively from the point of view of the other world. It is ‘from above.’ It is ‘from heaven.’<sup>2</sup> It resides, it is true, in a higher plane of existence than that in which the faith of Judaism lies. It approaches God from a higher side. But it approaches Him, still, from that one side only. It, too, is a faith of one dimension. As long, therefore, as the Judaic faith and the Christian faith are kept apart, neither can do more than bring us into *touch* with God. Either can teach us to *apprehend* Him; but neither can enable us to *comprehend* or *know* Him.

<sup>1</sup> John xvii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, iii. 13.



But let the two amalgamate together. Let them unite their concurrent forces. Multiply, if we may express ourselves in mathematical phraseology, the one into the other. And then they will instantly yield, as their joint product, a faith that is of two dimensions. For then we shall obtain a composite faith that is both from above and also from beneath; that is both of this world, and also not of this world; that sees God from a dual standpoint; that approaches Him from two sides simultaneously;—a faith that will endow us with the faculty not merely of apprehending, but of comprehending, God;—a faith whereby it will be possible to ‘lay hold on’ that eternal life, which, as we have seen, is nothing else than the knowledge of God and Christ; and a faith, therefore, which will enable us to say with Paul, ‘I *know* Him whom I have trusted.’<sup>1</sup>

And here it is very noteworthy that Christ Himself expressly declared that this other-life prize and this other-world goal are to be attained by an amalgamation of the new ‘trust in Christ’ of Christianity with the old ‘trust in God’ of Judaism. ‘Ye trust in God; trust also in Me.’<sup>2</sup> ‘Ye trust in God’—that is to say, you already possess the old Judaic ‘trust in God’ for temporal things; ‘trust also in Me.’ Why? What is the distinction which Christ is here drawing between the old trust and the new? What is it for which we are to trust in Christ as distinguished from trusting in God? The answer comes in the very next sentence. It is trust for the concerns of the other world. ‘In My Father’s house are many mansions. *I go to prepare a place for you.*’<sup>3</sup> From which it is clear that Christ’s words not only enjoin a fusion of the Old Testament ‘trust in God’ with the ‘trust in Christ’ of the New,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.<sup>2</sup> John xiv. 1.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv. 2.



but also explicitly declare that the New Testament trust is a trust in respect of a spiritual life and a future world. And this explains why it is that neither Judaism apart from Christianity, nor Christianity apart from Judaism, can impart the gift of eternal life. For life eternal is not, to know the God of Judaism, nor to know the Christ of Christianity; but to know *both*. 'This is life eternal, that they should know Thee the only true God, *and* Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent.'

The foregoing proposition as to the absolute necessity of possessing a faith of at least two dimensions in order to enable us to acquire that knowledge of God which is life eternal, is supported by yet further authority. It is confirmed in a remarkable manner by a passage in the Epistle to the Ephesians. The rigid scientific accuracy of the Bible, and the intensity of the philosophic thought which it displays, are nowhere more conspicuously exhibited than in the prayer 'that Christ may dwell in your hearts *by faith*; that ye, being rooted and grounded *in love*, may be able to *comprehend* with all saints what is *the breadth, and length, and depth, and height*: and to *know the love of Christ*, which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.'<sup>1</sup>

It is evident from this truly philosophic declaration that Religion is keenly alive to the fact that the essential basis of knowledge is that it must be a comprehension of more dimensions than one;—that, in order to know all that can be known of the love of Christ, we must comprehend its breadth and length and depth and height. And that Religion intends her votaries to understand that this comprehensive faith is to be

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii. 17-19.

acquired only by the amalgamation of the faith of Christianity with the faith of Judaism, is not only proved by every sermon and every discourse recorded in the New Testament, but is also significantly attested by the concluding words of the passage just cited, 'that ye may be filled (*ἵνα πληρωθῇτε*) unto all the fulness (*πλήρωμα*) of God.' For what is this but an echo of Christ's identical word, 'fulfil' (*πληρῶσαι*)—'I came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil'? And what, again, is this 'being filled with the knowledge of the love of Christ unto the fulness of God,' but that treasure of the old and the new, the possession of which enables 'the disciple to the kingdom of heaven to bring forth out of his treasure things new and old?'

If we would realise as vividly as possible the inefficiency of either the Judaic or the Christian faith, standing alone, to confer upon mankind any true *knowledge* of God, we have only to consider how imperfect and incomplete our conception of God would be if we had either of the two faiths without the other, and what an enormous increment in the knowledge of God is derivable from the combination of the two. Suppose, on the one hand, that we had only the faith of Judaism, and had never heard of Christianity. Then we should regard God-reliance as an efficient force for the purposes of our mundane existence, but as having little or no relation to the affairs of a future life. If, on the other hand, we were familiar with the New Testament, but had never heard of the Old, then we should be in danger of falling into the opposite error, of supposing that trust in God possesses a value which is exclusively, or almost exclusively, confined to a future existence; and we should consequently miss the one great purpose of life in this world—the pur-

pose that life is to be used as a means of acquiring, by daily experiences, the power of exercising and developing the faculty of faith; with the result that we should end by failing to acquire that faculty at all.

We see now exactly why it was that Christ insisted with such emphasis upon the necessity of Judaism and Christianity working together hand in hand. We understand exactly what He meant when He said that Christianity came to 'fulfil' the law and the prophets. For either faith, standing alone, was imperfect because it was incomplete, as being a faith of only one dimension, and therefore incapable of imparting knowledge, as distinguished from perception. That full 'knowledge of the love of Christ,' which leads up to 'being filled unto all the fulness of God,' can be derived only from a composition of the two. We see, too, a meaning, unseen before, in Christ's declaration that 'every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven'—that is to say, every aspirant to eternal life—must 'bring forth out of his treasure things new and old.' For the things new and old are the new faith and the old. And eternal life is only to be grasped by the unification of the two. Not that either faith is less than perfect for its own uses and inside its own province. Within its own limitations either is sufficient for itself. For the immediate and mundane purposes of faith there is virtue in a touch. 'Jesus said, Somebody hath touched Me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of Me.'<sup>1</sup> Such a faith is sufficient for all mundane purposes. It can heal the sick, give eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. But there it stops. The faith that can impart that knowledge of God which is life eternal must be a faith of compre-

<sup>1</sup> Luke viii. 46.

hension. It must be a hand that has learnt to grasp as well as touch, before it can succeed in laying hold on eternal life.

It will, of course, be observed that the truth thus established is a thoroughly *comprehensive* truth; for it is a truth to which all avenues of thought converge. From the point of view of Christianity it is the 'fulfilling the law and the prophets.' From the point of view of Judaism it is the 'bringing forth out of our treasure things new and old.' From the biological standpoint it represents the inter-relations of plant and animal. As regarded from the standpoint of pure mechanics it is a dimensional faith—a faith that is 'from beneath' and also 'from above.' And lastly, to the psychologist it means dimensional knowledge—a knowledge that is both 'of this world' and 'not of this world.' It means to know 'what is the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ that we may be filled unto all the fulness of God.' It means to 'know Thee, the only true God, *and* Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'

And thus it will be seen that the foregoing conclusions do not rest solely upon the *ipse dixit* of Religion. They are, in the truest sense of the word, philosophic, and emerge, in fact, from an amalgamation of philosophic and religious considerations. They are reached by that wider application of the comprehensive method, which consists in approaching them from the religious and philosophic standpoints simultaneously. If it be true that all knowledge starts with the physical and culminates in the metaphysical; if there are two distinct stages in the history of all knowledge, whether physical or metaphysical—the earlier, the stage of apprehending, the later, the stage



of comprehending; if eternal life be to know God and Christ; if the essence of all knowledge of the second order lies in touching on at least two sides simultaneously; and if faith be the spiritual organ of touch; then it is easy to understand, for reasons which are as true to Philosophy as they are to Religion, why, in the history of the age-long process of acquiring eternal life by learning to know God and Christ, the old-world Judaic faith came first; and why that faith was not, and could not be, made perfect ('fulfilled') until there had been added to it, and blended with it, the later and higher faith of Christianity. Then we discern a new and additional meaning in Christ's words, *addressed to the Jews*, 'Ye are from beneath; I am from above'; and we appreciate, with an intensity not known before, what He meant when He said that He came not to destroy the law or the prophets but to fulfil. Then we have learnt to decipher the parable of the prosperous householder, and to perceive why the disciple to the kingdom of heaven must bring forth out of his treasure things new and old. For all these are truths which belong scarcely less to Philosophy than to Religion. They are facts in attestation of which Philosophy and Religion have affixed their common seals. We do not—we cannot—realise how momentous are the philosophic, as well as the religious, consequences which hang upon the issue, when we talk lightly of severing the New Testament from the Old. If we did we should never even suggest the possibility of such a partition. For the suggestion is more than infidelity to Religion. It is heresy to Science, and treason to Philosophy. Upon this matter these three great witnesses to the truth join hands in a triple alliance. And this three-



fold unanimity explains why Christ attached to the unification of the forces of Christianity and Judaism an importance so profound that, in pronouncing it by a perpetual decree, He employed the most solemn and emphatic terms that language can supply:—‘*Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.*’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 18.

## CHAPTER XII

### PHYSICAL PAST AND SPIRITUAL FUTURE

THE examination of the anatomy of Truth contained in the foregoing chapters has been principally confined to the internal structure of the Order of Truth known as Religion; and we have found that the comprehensive method of treatment, as thus applied, has been the means of adding a considerable increment to our *knowledge* of Religion in respect of the relations which we have found to exist amongst the constituent parts of which Religion is composed. It must not, however, be supposed that we have at all exhausted the possibilities of that mode of treatment, or that Religion has nothing more to gain from its scientific application. It is possible to carry the argument a great deal further still; and the method will have very imperfectly performed its task if it be suffered to conclude its message at the present stage.

It was pointed out in an earlier chapter that this mode of treatment is applicable not only to some groups of phenomena, but to all. Even the largest conceivable groups are capable of being studied comprehensively, and cannot be said to be *known* at all until they have been so studied. In order to complete our inquiry, therefore, it is necessary to extend it from the internal structure of the branch of knowledge known as Religion to the external relations which exist

between Religion, regarded as a whole, and the other two grand Orders of Truth known respectively as Science and Philosophy. It will be found that, as thus applied, it has a contribution of extreme importance to add to our knowledge of the anatomy of Truth.

It has been shown that the main point of contrast which distinguishes Judaism from the Christian Religion is the distinction between the temporal and the eternal. Judaism, as we have seen, absorbs the interests of the present life. Its rewards and punishments are temporal. It is not, it is true, wholly devoid of promises and warnings for the next world. But they are not its immediate, or, at all events, not its most essential, objects. Its principal theme is mundane prosperity. Its primary message to mankind is concerning present weal and present woe.

Christianity, on the other hand, rises to the higher conception of making the concerns of a future existence its first and primary object. The Christian Code is a system dedicated to the interests of another world; and its message to mankind is other-worldliness. The two systems by no means conflict with one another. On the contrary, they dovetail together into two constituent parts of a perfect whole. When the Code of Judaism teaches us that God-reliance is the only true rule of conduct—the only, but all-sufficient, talisman of happiness and success in this life—it is preparing us for the reception of that still higher doctrine of reliance on Christ, Who, according to Christianity, is, in the spiritual sphere, the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Now, it is almost universally supposed that the New Testament doctrines relative to spiritual life and the

spiritual world are matters which have to be taken entirely on trust. They are assumed to be theories, the truth of which is incapable of scientific demonstration, and rests solely on Christ's *ipse dixit*. In reality, no notion is so wide of the truth as this. For it involves a total misunderstanding of the first principles of Nature. The fact is that these doctrines are as amenable to proof as any theory whatsoever. Under a comprehensive examination, in the light of modern scientific knowledge, they prove to be not merely tenable hypotheses, but inevitable corollaries deducible from the known course of Nature—unavoidable deductions from the law of evolution. If we believe—as we do—in the modern theory of evolution, we *must* accept the Christian doctrines. For to deny the latter is to reject the former.

In order to realise as vividly as possible the truth of this assertion, it will be useful to construct an approximate genealogical tree of the Animal Kingdom, from the primordial germ of animal life down to man, illustrating the course which evolution has pursued in the development of the various orders of animal life. It is not, of course, possible, in the present state of scientific knowledge, and perhaps it never will be possible, to delineate with any approach to certainty a really accurate pedigree of animal evolution. Many even of the most rudimentary questions which the problem involves, such, for instance, as the arthropodic *versus* the cephalopodic theory of the descent of the Vertebrates, are still the subjects of controversy, and will very possibly never be conclusively determined. But all such questions are immaterial for our present purpose, which is concerned only with the broad general fact that all the various orders of animal life

which have existed, or now exist, upon our planet, have evolved from a single type, or, at most, from a few closely related types, of life, and are therefore all possessed of a common, though in many cases an immensely distant, family relationship to one another.

With the object of illustrating these truths, the accompanying genealogical tree of the Animal Kingdom has been prepared. It is based upon the genealogical trees constructed, with much ingenuity, by Professor Ernst Haeckel, from data which, though hypothetical in detail, are undeniably true in general principle, and are, therefore, sufficiently accurate for the purpose of our present argument.

A glance at this pedigree will show that it contains a narrow line of descent from the protozoic monad to man. Down that line the ancestors of all the various orders of animals indicated in the diagram have passed, until the various points have been reached at which their respective orders have branched off from the direct line of descent. The moment that each order betrayed the first symptom of a tendency to acquire the distinctive characteristics which differentiate it from man, it left the main line and started off on a branch line of its own.

Now observe the following points of interest in connection with the diagram before us.

Note, first, that whereas the pathway of descent which connects the primordial germ with man is strait and narrow, the area which is covered by the totality of all the other paths, along which other organisms have developed, is broad and extended. It is not that the line of descent of any particular organism is necessarily broader than that of the human family. The point to be noted is that the total area through which those



numerous pathways ramify, is wide as compared with the narrow space occupied by the line of the human pedigree. If we divide the diagram into two areas, the one confined to the human line of descent, and the other including all the other lines, we see that the former is narrow and the latter broad.

Note, next, that the number of animal beings which succeeded in following the line of direct descent from the primordial germ to man, is infinitesimal as compared with the myriads which branched off at different stages from that direct line in the various directions indicated on the diagram. The narrow line marks the genealogy of the few; the extended area contains the genealogies of the many.

Observe, next, that if we accept the scientific view that 'life' means correspondence with environment, and varies both in quantity and quality according as the environment with which an organism is brought into correspondence is wide or narrow, then it follows that the line of descent from the monad to man, depicted on the diagram, is a pathway from a low and cramped form of vitality to a life which is inexpressibly higher and richer in every respect. It represents an evolution from a less abundant life to a more abundant. And when we reflect that the diagram is a life-chart depicting the evolution of all animal life, and that the various lines drawn on the diagram represent pathways to the various kinds of life therein mentioned; that each of those kinds of life varies in abundance from all the rest; that the life to which the human race alone has attained is immeasurably more abundant than any of the others—indeed, than all the others put together; and lastly, that, when once any order of animal organisms had swerved off from the

narrow way which leads from the monad to man, it was impossible for that order to retrace its steps back into the direct line of descent, so that every such deviation was *destructive* of all hope that the deviating order of organisms would ever attain to this highest and most abundant human life; it at once becomes obvious that the broad way depicted on the diagram represents a 'way that leadeth to destruction.' And it is equally clear that, if we use the word 'life' as meaning the highest and most abundant form of life included in the diagram, then of all the lines shown on that chart the 'strait and narrow' line, which connects the monad with man, represents the only 'way which leadeth unto life.'

Realising now the full import of the foregoing considerations, we shall find it impossible to examine the diagram without being irresistibly reminded of Christ's portentous words:—'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.'<sup>1</sup>

See here, then, how exact a pictorial representation of Christ's words the foregoing diagram presents. It shows us a way—the only way—which leadeth unto life; and a way that leadeth to destruction. This way of life is strait and narrow; and this way of destruction is wide and broad. The vast majority of animal organisms have trodden the broad way that leadeth to destruction. The narrow path of life has been for the few. If Christ, when He uttered His momentous words, had had before Him such a chart of life as that above depicted, He could not have chosen any words

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vii. 13, 14.

which would more accurately or more graphically describe it than the words which He actually employed. And, conversely, if we were to try to illustrate Christ's utterance in pictorial form, we could not do so more faithfully or more vividly than in the form of the chart of life which modern science has supplied.

But now observe the corollary which emerges from this strange coincidence. The life-chart which we have been discussing represents a truth. It is a pictorial presentation, correct in principle, however inaccurate in detail, of the history of the evolution of life. That there has been a connecting line of descent from the primordial germ of animal life down to the human family, from which, at some point or other, and in all probability at numerous points, the various orders of animal life have deviated, is a belief to which modern Science stands fully committed. If we can be sure of anything that Science can teach us of the genealogy of animal life in general, and of the human pedigree in particular, we may be sure of this. And consequently Christ's words, if they were intended to apply at all to the evolution of physical animal life, would stand supported by the sanction of the highest intellectual authority to which human intelligence can appeal. If by 'life' Christ meant the highest animal life; and if by 'destruction' He meant failure to attain to that life; then His words would contain a vivid statement of one of the most recondite truths which modern Science has unravelled. And then modern Science would have but one verdict to pronounce upon Christ's words—that they are true.

But Christ was not speaking of the attainment of the highest animal life, or of the success or failure of physiological evolution. The strait and narrow

way of which He was discoursing was not the triumphal progress, through the past ages, of human development; nor did the broad way of which He spoke designate those destructive deviations from the narrow path, which had closed for ever, for all sub-human beings, the gate which led to the heights of intellectual and moral growth. He was delivering not a lecture on the past, but a message for the future. And the gate, through which He bade His disciples strive to enter, opened on to a track which human feet had yet to tread. All this is true enough. But the amazing feature in the wonderful drama is the truth, which modern Science is only now beginning to discern, that, in thus prescribing for the future, Christ was simultaneously drawing upon the past; that, in the very process of preparing a chart for the future guidance of His disciples, He was actually delineating a diagram of what had already gone before. And thus His words fall on modern ears with a two-fold significance. In the light of recent discovery, His utterances are found to contain a double sanction and a double truth. They unfold, it is true, the laws which were to govern the as yet unexplored region of spiritual development. But they also contain a faithful record of the laws which, through all past ages, had already guided the destinies of physical evolution. In pointing out the landmarks which were to direct the footsteps of the aspirant to spiritual vitality, they reveal the fact that those landmarks are but extensions into the spiritual plane of corresponding beacons which, long ages before, had served to mark out in the natural plane the narrow way that led to moral, intellectual, and æsthetic life.

From these obvious truths, turn now to consider the

means by which, in the physical plane, the fight for the highest life was won. What was the loadstone which guided the footsteps of the successful aspirants along that strait and narrow path?

Animal organisms, in the fierce struggle for existence, had a choice of two methods of self-advancement presented to them. The one was the natural method of employing and relying upon the physical weapons of offence and defence with which Nature had endowed them. The other was a method so immeasurably more intangible, more subtle, and more difficult to apply, that, in comparison with the natural method, it may almost be classed as supernatural—the method of employing and relying upon the dawning powers of the intellect. Suppose that, at an early stage in the evolution of animal life, two lowly organisms were engaged in an encounter with one another. Suppose that one of the two, so far as natural armature and strength were concerned, was better equipped for the conflict than the other. To the onlookers, if they possessed the capacity for speculating on the subject at all, it must have appeared to be a foregone conclusion that the weaker of the two would necessarily fall a victim to the superior equipment of the stronger. The result of the impending contest must have seemed as certain and as obvious as the expected victory of Goliath over his unarmed opponent doubtless appeared to the onlooking Philistines.

But suppose that, by an unexpected feat of intellectual dexterity previously unexampled in the annals of animal life, the weaker combatant had executed some adroit manœuvre whereby it managed to evade the overwhelming physical superiority of its mightier opponent, and to convert a seemingly im-



pending defeat into a signal victory. It would thereby have revealed to itself and to its wondering companions a secret of unimaginable import. It would have disclosed the fact that there are two ways of encountering the difficulties of life—the one physical, the other psychical. It would have demonstrated that, in addition to the visible and tangible resources of brute force, supported by the material adjuncts of ponderous limb and impenetrable armature, animal organisms were possessed of a hidden and unsuspected faculty—a faculty so intangible, so immaterial, and so invisible, that it must have seemed but a slender reed upon which to rely against the material weapons of tooth and claw; but, in reality, so immeasurably more efficient and reliable that it was destined, in course of time, to transform the whole aspect of existence, and to enable the weakest and least valiant of its votaries to laugh to scorn the material terrors of tooth and claw and plate of mail.

Now, although the foregoing supposition may appear to be purely conjectural and even fanciful, inasmuch as there is naturally no record of the first occasion on which the imagined manœuvre was executed; yet, in reality, it is by no means suppositional,—still less supposititious. There cannot be the slightest doubt that at a comparatively early stage in the development of animal life a time came when, in the struggle for existence, animal organisms began to supplement their physical equipment of brute strength by summoning to their aid their intellectual resources of craft and cunning. And it is obvious that in course of time, as this novel process became better appreciated and more habitually practised, it must have been gradually discovered that the invisible, intangible

faculty of intelligence is, in reality, incomparably more effective, and consequently more reliable, whether as a weapon of offence or as a means of defence, than the visible and tangible weapons of tooth and claw.

This substitution of trust in the invisible and intangible in place of reliance upon the visible and the tangible, which thus proved itself the secret of the acquisition of the highest animal life, is exactly reproduced in the plane of spiritual life. It is the essential doctrine which lies at the very centre of Religion. 'Some put their trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.'<sup>1</sup> 'Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of Hosts.'<sup>2</sup> And that the very essence of Religion's doctrine of Faith is the substitution of trust in the invisible and intangible in place of reliance upon the visible and the tangible, is expressly confirmed by Christianity in the well-known definition of Faith—'Faith is the giving substance to *things hoped for*, the proving of *things not seen*.'<sup>3</sup> And the same truth is asserted, with even greater emphasis, in another passage, where faith is expressly contrasted with sight—'We walk by faith, not by sight.'<sup>4</sup>

And now observe that the key which, in the physical sphere, unlocked this golden secret of life—that, on occasions of danger or extremity, the unseen is immeasurably more reliable than the seen, for the purpose of providing those means of safety or deliverance which constitute the physical type of that

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xx. 7.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xi. 1 (R.V.).

<sup>4</sup> 2 Cor. v. 7 (διὰ πίστεως περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ ὁρᾶς). εἶδος means 'that which is seen.'

spiritual antitype which is known to Religion as 'the way of salvation'—was itself constructed of an amalgam composed of an admixture of the elements of difficulty and weakness. In the imagined, but not unreal, case which we have suggested, of an encounter between two organisms, the one physically superior and the other physically inferior, it was the pressing danger of the position which supplied the stimulus necessary to awaken into activity in the weaker organism the dormant faculty of intelligence. It was the consciousness of its own inferiority, of its own inability to encounter, with the material weapons which it possessed, the overwhelming peril that had arisen, that induced recourse to the less tangible, but immeasurably more potent, resources of its invisible and intangible faculties. And thus its physical weakness supplied the materials for its psychical strength; and, in so doing, furnished a standing type which both confirms and explains, for all time, Religion's favourite paradox, that it is one of the mysterious properties of 'faith'—faith, that is to say, in the invisible, as distinguished from reliance on the visible—that 'out of weakness we are made strong,'<sup>1</sup> and that 'My strength—God's strength—is made perfect in weakness.'<sup>2</sup>

Thus we see what a further increment of credibility Religion acquires from a comparison of modern scientific theories as to the natural history of animal life in the prehistoric past with the evolutionary development which Religion, two thousand years ago, announced as the predicted future of spiritual development. The identification of Christ's scheme of spiritual evolution with Nature's scheme of biological evolution, as disclosed by modern Science, can scarcely fai'

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 34.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 9.

to give, if not a new direction to our efforts, at least a new impulse to our energies. It imparts to His words a sense of reality which no other human consideration could supply. The probability that He was speaking from actual knowledge when He propounded the conditions and laws which, as He alleged, govern the course of spiritual development, is much more than doubled by the discovery that those conditions and laws are identical with the conditions and laws which, as we now know, had, long ages before, governed the progress of physiological development. Here, at all events, is a solid fact which removes Christ's words altogether from the region of fiction or romance, and stamps them with the brand of ineffable reality.

When, again, we discover that the Christian doctrine, that 'salvation' is attainable only by 'faith' in the unseen, as distinguished from, and contrasted with, reliance on the seen, is but an echo, in the spiritual plane of existence, of an exactly identical physiological law, of which all history and all pre-history are the exponents, it is impossible to deny that we have lighted upon a coincidence which is entitled to something more than a bare recognition. We find ourselves here confronted by a practical problem which challenges a practical investigation. For the truth is that this identification of the spiritual with the physical—this grafting of the future on to the past—stimulates our energies with a new and unexpected hope. The progress of spiritual evolution is so tardy and so slow; the path of spiritual development is so difficult to tread; indeed, the whole process is invested with such an appearance of mystery; it seems so improbable that we shall ever become anything better, or higher, or more spiritual, than what we are

to-day; that we are often tempted to abandon the whole struggle out of sheer desperation, more than half persuaded that we are chasing a phantom.

But the discovery that the way of life, which we are treading with faltering steps, is the very same path, though in a different plane of existence, as that which was successfully pursued long ages ago by the aspirants to intellectual life, should nerve us to fresh effort. To the humble organisms which, in the physical plane, trod the earlier stages of that 'narrow way,' the goal of intellectuality must have seemed not less shadowy and unreal, not less difficult and unattainable, than the spiritual goal appears to us to-day. And the fact that success has waited on their persistent efforts lends an additional sanction to 'the hope that is in us'—it stirs our hearts with a new and satisfying stimulus, 'that we through patience might have hope.'<sup>1</sup>

We see, then, that the *comprehensive* method of study, when utilised in its wider application for the purpose of effecting a comparison of Religion, regarded as a whole, with Science, is productive of verifications and explanations of much in Religion that otherwise might appear shadowy and unreal, on the one hand, or difficult and obscure, on the other. And it is important to realise that the scientific value of these results cannot be seriously called in question. No one can deny that the foregoing comparison of the spiritual future predicted by Religion with the physical past delineated by Science furnishes a perfectly legitimate and logical argument upon which to establish the credibility,—yes, and the unshakable veracity—of Religion's prophetic proclamation. If we believe, as

<sup>1</sup> Rom., xv, 4.



we do, that evolution, aided at the appropriate conjuncture by the creation of the germ of consciousness, has converted a monad into a man; if we believe, as we must, that evolution, which has never faltered in the past, is still in active operation to-day, and will most certainly continue to operate through measureless tracts of time in the future; if we believe, as experience compels us to believe, that progress is never stationary, that man himself is changing from day to day, and that the best members of the human race are already well advanced along the road towards that far-off pinnacle of spirituality to which the love of Christ is drawing them; then we have the strongest possible logical reasons for believing that Christ's doctrine was true, when He told of the broad way which leadeth to spiritual destruction, and the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto spiritual life.

Indeed, we may properly put the argument even higher still. The foregoing considerations furnish, not only the best possible grounds, but, from the purely rational point of view, conclusive grounds, for this belief. Christ's doctrine relates to an unseen world and an invisible God. The problem of Christianity is to cultivate the faculty of trust in God for the unknown concerns of a future life. How is this difficult faculty to be acquired? It is the most intangible, and, therefore, the most unattainable, thing in the world. Every factor in the case seems nebulous to the last degree. An invisible God; a future life of unknown possibilities; an unseen world;—no man hath seen any of these things at any time. How, then, can we learn the difficult lesson of trust, in relation to such intangibilities as these? Turn to Science for an answer to this question. Science, like Religion, is well acquainted with the great division

of things into the visible and the invisible. And Science, as we know, does possess some knowledge—indeed, a vast storehouse of knowledge—concerning certain departments of the invisible. How has this knowledge been acquired? Already we have discussed this question. Just as Religion declares that ‘the invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made,’<sup>1</sup> so, in the realm of Science, all our knowledge of the invisible and the immaterial is derived from, and built upon, our knowledge of the visible and the material. If, to borrow, once more, the illustration of which we have already made use, we have come to recognise the truth that a question has two sides, it is only because we had previously learnt the more visible fact that a stone, or a tree, or a mountain, has two sides. This, undoubtedly, is the scientific, as well as the religious, answer to the question,—the unseen is perceived through the seen.

But if so, then it necessarily follows that Religion is scientifically right in dividing the Bible into the Old Testament and the New. That division of the subject exhibits a rigid adherence to the scientific requirements of the case. The pathway, and the only pathway, to the knowledge and love of God, leads off, for many a long furlong of its length, along the hills and dales of this visible world. For the physical sphere is a working model of the metaphysical; and the history of the material universe repeats itself in the plane of spiritual existence. And thus the study of the past history of the physical world and its inhabitants acquires a practical value which far outweighs its wealth of antiquarian interest. For the past, as thus interpreted, is a prophecy of the future, and the

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

physical is a forecast of the spiritual. The truth of this assertion is attested by Christ Himself. For it is the converse of His own rebuke to the impotence of unreasonable scepticism. 'If I have told you of earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things.'<sup>1</sup> We cannot. Such a belief is an impossibility. But, by parity of reasoning, the converse scepticism is impossible also. If we believe the earthly, we *must* believe the heavenly. And it is just because we do believe the joint message of Religion and Science concerning the past history of physical things that we cannot refuse our assent to the united voices of Religion and Philosophy, when they tell us of the spiritual things that are, and that are to be.

<sup>1</sup> John iii. 12.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE PHENOMENAL AND THE REAL

NOT yet have we reached the widest possible application of the comprehensive method of treatment. If we would acquire the most comprehensive attainable knowledge of the Universe, we must apply the comprehensive method of treatment to the whole Universe. In the last chapter we applied this method to that widest group of *Phenomena* which includes all phenomena. There still remains, however, the yet wider group of *Things*, which includes all things. The totality of existences includes, as we have seen, both the Relative and the Absolute; both the Conditioned and the Unconditioned; both the Phenomenal and the Real. We have dealt with the comprehensive method in relation to the totality of phenomena. We have now to apply it to the totality of existences, by examining comprehensively the inter-relations of the phenomenal and the real.

This widest application of the method is necessary, not only for the purpose of completing the argument by leading up to the true interpretation of the inter-relations of time and eternity, to be discussed in the next chapter, but also because in this widest application is to be found the solution, or at all events a clue to the solution, of what at first sight appears to be a

difficulty, but is in reality a confirmation of the foregoing interpretation of the anatomy of Truth.

It will be recollected that in tracing out, in the chapter on *Plant and Animal*, the various factors which establish the formula that Judaism is to Christianity in the psychical plane what the plant is to the animal in the physical plane, we noticed that in either plane an exact parallelism is to be found in respect of the complementary uses which are made of atmospheric conditions. As the plant assimilates from the atmosphere in which it lives carbon dioxide and throws off free oxygen, whilst the animal performs the complementary function of absorbing the oxygen and rejecting the carbon dioxide; so Judaism assimilates from the atmosphere in which the religious vitality is immersed the interests of this world and disregards the interests of the future world, whilst Christianity, reversing the process, absorbs the interests of the future world, actually rejecting the interests of the present world. 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.'<sup>1</sup>

Does not this strange injunction 'Love not the world' negative the possibility of any amalgamation of the Christian Religion with the Judaic? It is clear from what has been said that the whole system of Judaism, being based upon mundane rewards and punishments, is hopelessly antagonistic to the Christian injunction 'Love not the world.' The latter doctrine seems, at first sight, to frustrate and extinguish the vital principle by which the whole system of the Judaic Religion is animated and informed. How, then, can a Religion which appeals almost exclusively to the

<sup>1</sup> 1 John ii. 15.



hope of worldly rewards and the dread of worldly punishments—in other words, to love of the world—be brought into harmony with a Religion which so directly conflicts with the very principle which underlies its constitution? Does not the Christian command, ‘Love not the world,’ belie Christ’s own emphatic declaration, ‘I came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil’?<sup>1</sup>

In the presence of so radical a dilemma let us inquire whether the comprehensive method of treatment, when used in its widest application, can furnish any clue to a solution. Is Philosophy faced by any similar difficulty? And if so, how does Philosophy dispose of it? Let us consider these questions in some little detail.

All knowledge, as we have seen, starts with the Material. We cannot frame a thought or coin a word concerning the Immaterial until we have first learned to think and speak of the Material. But what do we really know of the material? When we come to analyse it, we find that all our knowledge of the material starts from a paradox. Everything that we know about it, everything that we think concerning it, consists of a deduction deduced, sometimes logically, sometimes illogically, as the case may be, but always deduced from a fallacy. The difference between the most brilliant and the most obtuse reasoning concerning material phenomena, is that the one makes a logical, and the other an illogical, use of its premises; but in either case those premises are based upon ultimate assumptions which are, from the logical point of view, so absolutely unsound—or, at least, so absolutely unintelligible—that it is almost an open question whether, after all, the researches of Science, or the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 17.

dreams of Fiction, lead the more closely to an approximation to the Truth.

We are much too apt to overlook both the magnitude and the importance of the limitations which Nature has thus thought fit to impose upon the possibilities of thought. We so habitually assume that a logical treatment of our premises must necessarily land us safely in a sound conclusion, that we constantly ignore the fact that the human intellect is so constituted that it is compelled to base all its cogitations upon certain unproved, and unprovable, assumptions. Accepting the truth of these, we can prove with perfect reliability the truth or untruth of every derivative proposition. But we do not sufficiently realise that the accuracy of the conclusions at which we thus arrive depends entirely upon the truth of the initial assumptions from which we start. We forget that, if any one of those initial assumptions is wrong, then our most logical deductions are—or, at least, may be—unsound also. And, above all, we habitually ignore the fact that every one of those initial assumptions, upon which the whole fabric of thought and knowledge is based, is found, when tested by careful analysis, to be nothing better than a tissue of self-contradictions.

Take a very simple illustration. One of the initial assumptions which we habitually take for granted in dealing with material phenomena, and upon which we have built an enormous mass of conclusions, is the proposition that every body of Matter, whether large or small, must always occupy a certain portion of space. We accept the soundness of this assumption for the simple reason—upon which all our initial assumptions are based—that its negation is inconceivable. To assert

that any material thing can, even for a moment of time, be nowhere, is to make an inconceivable proposition. And as the laws of thought compel us to accept the conceivable in preference to the inconceivable, we feel bound to accept, and, as a matter of fact, we do accept, the conceivable proposition that every existing material thing must always be somewhere; and we reject the inconceivable proposition that any material thing can ever be nowhere.

But if we proceed to test this seemingly conceivable proposition, we are not long before we find that it is itself perfectly untenable.

Observe, first, that the material universe, so far as it is known to us, is everywhere in motion. Everything, for instance, on our planet partakes of the earth's motions, both axial and orbital. An object may be at rest in its relation to the earth. But even then, by virtue of the earth's motion, it is still travelling with enormous velocity through space. Absolute rest is an unknown quantity. Motion is everywhere; Status, nowhere.

Now, in what portion of space is a moving body at any given moment of time? Take, for instance, the case of a cannon-ball. In what part of space is it at any moment whilst it is travelling from the cannon to the target? Suppose that it travels four miles, and that it occupies four seconds in performing this journey. It is clear that it is not at any one particular place during these four seconds, for during that period of time it is engaged in passing through as many different spaces as are contained in its four-mile journey. Equally clear is it, and for the same reason, that it is not at any one spot during one second, for during that second it travels one mile; nor during half a second, as it

then travels half a mile; nor during a tenth, or a hundredth, or a thousandth of a second; for during each of these periods it is travelling a corresponding fraction of a mile. And even if we descend to the most infinitesimal figures imaginable—say a billionth or a trillionth of a second—the same reasoning applies. Whether we assume Motion to be a continuous or an intermittent progression through space, it at once becomes obvious, when we come to think of it, that a moving projectile is never at any particular spot. For if, on the one hand, Motion be really continuous—as distinguished from spasmodic—it is obvious that such continuity must be just as real in relation to the shortest imaginable space of time, as it is in relation to the longest; so that it would be just as untrue to say that the moving cannon-ball is at any one spot during, say, the trillionth of a second, as it would be to say that it is at any one spot during the four seconds that elapse between its leaving the cannon's mouth and its impact upon the target. And if, on the other hand, we take refuge in the only alternative supposition, and say that Motion is discontinuous—that it consists of a succession of infinitesimal leaps separated from one another by infinitesimal stoppages—we are no better off. For, even on this supposition, the leaps themselves—the periods of actual translation from each of the imagined stations to the next—can only be conceived as being continuous whilst they last; for otherwise they would not constitute Motion at all. And if so, the same considerations must apply to each of these periods of translation as those which have just been discussed.

Where, then, is the cannon-ball during any given fraction of time? No matter how small we make that

fraction, analysis shows clearly enough that the cannon-ball is not, during that fraction, at any one place. It is not here. It is not there. It is not anywhere. And if it is not anywhere, it is nowhere.

And thus, on analysis, we find that such a fundamental and seemingly simple conception as that of Motion proves to be utterly unintelligible. It annihilates, for the time being, one of the most prominent of our conceptions of Matter. We cannot say that any material body can ever be nowhere; and yet we are equally unable to affirm that any material body, whilst in motion, is ever anywhere, even for the shortest imaginable space of time. And as all known bodies are constantly in motion, we find ourselves here landed in a hopeless dilemma. No body can ever be nowhere; and yet no body is ever anywhere.

If the phenomena of Motion prove, when analysed, to be irreconcilable with our ideas as to the relations of Matter to Space, the relations of Motion to Status are, if possible, still more perplexing. For Motion and Status are two mutually irreconcilable conceptions, which we cannot by any mental effort bring into relation to one another. That there must be some contactual relation between the two appears to be a necessary corollary deducible from the observed facts of everyday life, for we constantly see the one passing into the other.<sup>1</sup> But the mode or nature of the transition lies utterly beyond our powers of conception. We can think of two objects, the one in motion and the other stationary. But we cannot by any possibility conceive how a moving object can pass into the

<sup>1</sup> We are here, of course, speaking of Status in relation to the Earth. It will be seen that in the ensuing pages the term 'status' will be frequently used in this sense.



condition of Status; or how a stationary object can enter the category of Motion. We habitually speak as if the two conditions were capable of approaching one another—or, at all events, as if Motion were capable of approaching Status. We speak of an object—say, a railway train—as travelling so slowly that it is almost stationary. Almost stationary! The expression is a monstrous misnomer. How can a thing be almost stationary? Either it is quite stationary, or it is not stationary at all. Diminution of speed does not really constitute any measure of proximity to Status. A slowly moving object may be much further from Status than a swiftly moving object. A rifle-bullet, travelling with a velocity of a thousand yards a second, may be suddenly arrested by the target and be thereby brought into the stationary condition in a fraction of a second; while a railway train, moving at the rate of only a few yards a minute, may continue to so move for minutes, or even longer, without coming to a standstill.

To prove how untenable the expression ‘almost stationary’ really is, we have only to reverse it and say ‘almost moving.’ If Motion ever draws near to Status, then Status must be correspondingly near to Motion. If it be permissible to say of a moving object that it is travelling so slowly that it is almost stationary, it must be equally permissible to say of a stationary object that it stands so fast that it is almost moving. The latter proposition every one will reject. Yet it is no more illegitimate or absurd than the former. For the truth is that Motion, whether fast or slow, bears no relation whatever to Status. Both the expressions ‘almost stationary’ and ‘almost moving’ are equally absurd, for the simple reason that both

are illegitimate attempts to relate together two conceptions which are absolutely and everlastingly unrelated to one another.

If we wish to realise to ourselves still more vividly how impossible it is to relate together in thought the two categories of Motion and Status we have only to recall the observations which have just been made upon Motion. A cannon-ball, when stationary, undoubtedly occupies a certain portion of Space. It is somewhere. A moving cannon-ball, as we have seen, does not, even during the smallest possible fraction of time, occupy any portion of Space. It is nowhere. Obviously it is impossible to conceive how the cannon-ball can pass out of the nowhere into the where, or back from the where into the nowhere. We may think of a cannon-ball as stationary, or we may think of it as in motion. But the passage from the one condition to the other is unthinkable.

Once again. In order still further to illustrate not only our total absence of knowledge of material phenomena, but also the misleading and deceptive nature of such pseudo-knowledge of them as we do possess, turn for a moment to consider what a material phenomenon really is. Most of us are under the impression that we possess a fairly accurate knowledge of what surrounding material objects are like. In this highly important matter we trust implicitly to the evidence of our senses; and it never occurs to us, or, at least, to those of us who have not considered the matter, to doubt for an instant the accuracy of the verdict which our perceptions are continually recording. Ask any one to describe any common object—say, a table. He will give the well-known description; and, having done so, he will naturally believe, with

the utmost confidence, that his description accurately represents what the table is really like.

But this conclusion, however reasonable it may at first sight appear, is, in reality, based upon a fallacy of the very first magnitude—the fallacy of assuming that an effect bears a resemblance to the cause which has produced it. The table is the cause which produces an impression on our senses; and the impression which the table so produces is the effect. The belief that the table bears any sort of resemblance to the impression which it produces on our senses is based upon the assumption that a cause must necessarily be—or, at least, probably is—like its effect. But this assumption is not only destitute of any evidence, but is actually negatived by every test that can be applied. I strike a blow. My will is the cause; my hand is the instrument; the blow is the effect. What resemblance is there between my will and the blow? Or even between my will *plus* my hand, and the blow? There is none. I sing a song. Here, again, my will is the cause, and my breath, impelled by my lungs, and modulated by my throat, tongue, and lips, is the instrument. My will, whether with or without my breath, bears no sort of similarity to the song which I sing. A fire breaks out in a building and reduces it to ruins. The fire, which is the cause, is not in the smallest degree like the ruins, which are the effect. And so on, throughout the whole range of human experience. Wherever we compare together cause and effect, we find utter dissimilarity. There is a *relation* between the two; but no *resemblance*.

Applying these illustrations to the case of the table, we are forced to the conclusion that it is impossible to describe it at all. We have not, and never can have,

the least notion what it is like. All that we can do is to describe the impression which it makes upon our senses. But so far from being justified in concluding that the table is in the least like the impression which it has produced, we have the strongest possible reasons for believing that, though there is a relation, there is not the slightest similarity, between the two.

In view of the foregoing considerations, what are we to say when we observe a moving object pass from the category of motion to the category of status? Must we—or, indeed, may we—say that something inconceivable has happened? At first sight such a conclusion appears irresistible, and in fact we have in this chapter been making use of the expression. But a little consideration will show that even this conclusion is, not only not imperative, but not permissible.

In his *Principles of Psychology* Herbert Spencer has conclusively shown that the logical ground on which we base our belief in all axiomatic truths is the inconceivability of their negations. As often as we are brought face to face with any ultimate question, we justify the solution of it, at which we arrive, by the consideration that the contrary conclusion is inconceivable.

To this theory it was objected by Sir William Hamilton that it proves too much. For there are certain alternative propositions, one or other of which must be true, and yet both of which are inconceivable. For instance, the theory would prove that Space cannot have a limit, because a limit to Space is inconceivable; and yet that Space must have a limit, because unlimited Space is inconceivable. So that the theory would prove that Space both has a limit and has no limit, which is absurd. To this objection



Spencer, amongst other answers, offers the following: 'Why,' he asks, 'do you say that it is absurd to say that Space both has a limit and has no limit?' 'Because,' Sir William Hamilton replies, 'it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be.' 'But how,' rejoins Spencer, 'do you *know* that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be?' To this question there is no answer except that our criterion of *this* impossibility is its inconceivability. And thus we come at last to conceivability as the ultimate test of truth.<sup>1</sup>

It is a corollary deducible from the law of *the inconceivability of the contrary* thus established by Herbert Spencer, that it is never permissible to conclude that an inconceivable event has taken place. Seeing that our judgment of facts is based ultimately upon their conceivability, it is clear that we cannot on any occasion justify the opinion that the inconceivable has occurred. For if on one occasion, why not also on others? And then what becomes of the law? And what becomes of Reason? We have no basis of thought left. Measured by the standard of human intelligence—and human beings have neither the right nor the power to apply any other standard—the inconceivable is merely another name for the impossible. And it is, therefore, an intellectual law that the inconceivable never occurs. To assert the contrary is to give the lie to our intelligence—to commit the most heinous crime known to Logic, the crime of intellectual suicide.

What, then, is the true conclusion to be deduced from the phenomenon of Motion passing into Status? I see a missile projected from a cannon, and, after traversing the intervening space, arrested by the

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. pp. 424, 425 (4th Edn.).



target. My eyes inform me that something has happened which, as my intelligence assures me, cannot have occurred. In this matter I must and do believe the evidence of my senses. I must and do also believe the evidence of my intelligence. How am I to avoid the resulting dilemma? There is one mode of escape, and one only. The Unknown Cause is the Truth; the perceived effect is an untruth. In this unavoidable conclusion lies the explanation of the whole mystery. The truth of what I have seen is not what I have seen, nor anything like what I have seen. It bears the closest possible relation, but not the slightest resemblance, to it. All that I have seen is, from the point of view of abstract truth, utterly unlike the unseen Reality—so unlike it that it is itself quite misleading. And thus, by an inexorable logic we are conducted straight to that strange, but indisputable and unavoidable, paradox—the Unseen Reality has, as its necessary correlative and complement, a seen unreality. Truth, as it is known to Science, and Truth, as it really is, are as far asunder as the poles.

How widely real Truth differs from the phenomenal truths known to Science—how completely the one may sometimes, and perhaps always, be even an actual reversal of the other—may be shown by a specific illustration. Turn from Truth in its widest sense to that more particular department of Truth known by the name of Justice. Jurists have a familiar maxim, *Summum jus, summa injuria*—superlative justice produces superlative injustice. This somewhat perplexing formula is an attempt to express the fact that, even in the most perfect system of jurisprudence that human ingenuity can devise, the defects which it necessarily contains are such that a too rigid application of its

rules leads to a result the very opposite to what is intended. An excess of justice is found to result only in complete injustice. This ineradicable taint is not merely due to maladministration. It is deeply ingrained in the entire system. In the very nature of things it must be so. For equity is compounded of conflicting elements—the element of egoism and the element of altruism. And these two conflicting elements are so ubiquitous in their manifestations, and so uncompromising in their demands, that those who have studied with any care the fundamental principles of the juridical science are forced to acknowledge that not only does ideal justice lie altogether beyond the reach of human thought, but that, by a strange obliquity, the nearer we approach to that ideal, the further we recede from the object of our search. Every effort that has been made to amalgamate together these refractory elements has only led at last to that melancholy confession of failure—*Summum jus, summa injuria!* And this failure is attributable not to any shortcoming on the part of jurisprudents, but to an inherent vice in phenomenal things. It is a necessary consequence of the incompatibility of the Relative with the Absolute. It is in the ethical plane exactly what the old doctrine of Original Sin is in the theological plane. We are apt to smile at that ancient doctrine, as if it were antiquated and obsolete. But it is true. For it is but the expression, on the part of those who framed it, of their consciousness of the fact that unregenerated human nature cannot be brought into line with the requirements of Absolute Truth and Ideal Goodness. It is the recognition of the complete and everlasting incompatibility which subsists between ‘the carnal’ and ‘the spiritual.’ ‘For the carnal mind

is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God.’<sup>1</sup> And in the same way the incompatibility of the phenomenal and the real is a sort of Original Sin in physical Nature, resulting from the fact that the phenomenal and the real are complementary, and not convertible, terms. Either is the complement of the other. For the phenomenal is enmity against the real: for it is not subject to the law of the real, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the phenomenal cannot conform to the real. No wonder, then, that human ingenuity, in endeavouring to frame a code of relative justice, has failed to devise anything like a perfect system of ideal Justice! No wonder that every approach to the one marks a departure from the other! No wonder that *summum jus* produces only *summa injuria*! For ideal Justice—God’s Justice—is human justice turned upside down. Justice, as we know it, and Justice, as it really is, are far as the poles asunder.

In this fact, no doubt, is to be found the vindication of what often appears to be a fatal defect in the scheme of Religion—the seeming partiality and injustice of many of the dispensations of Providence. In considering these we must not forget what an immeasurable gulf lies between every department of the truth of which we are conscious, and Truth as it really is. We must remember that the real constitution of the universe is totally different from the aspect which it presents to us; and that one of the profoundest, as well as the most recondite, of truths that has ever been uttered is contained in the prophet’s declaration,

<sup>1</sup> Rom. viii. 7, 8.

‘My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord.’<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen from the foregoing that a due appreciation of the real Truth necessarily involves a complete reversal of all our preconceived notions concerning things in general. If we would see things, not as they seem, but as they are—not in their temporary relations to our present mundane existence, but in their eternal and absolute actuality, as they will affect us, when once we have succeeded in breaking away from time and emerging into the eternal and the real—then we must totally reconstruct our most cherished ideas. We must abandon our old belief that the seen at all represents the reality of things, or in the least resembles that reality. And we must embrace with single-hearted sincerity the substituted belief that the seen is but an impression induced upon our senses by surrounding phenomena;—an impression sufficiently true, for the purposes of our mundane phenomenal existence; but so utterly unlike the reality which lies behind the phenomenal, that, for all purposes directly relating to that reality, it is unreliable, misleading, and untrue. So radical is the change of ideas thus forced upon us, that it amounts to the adoption of a new intellectual faith and an altered intellectual creed. The approach to the Truth—not as it seems, but as it is—necessitates a total upheaval of all our preconceived notions concerning things—an entire recasting of all our ideas. And it is here to be specially noted that this conclusion is forced upon us, not by the aid of Religion, but from purely philosophical considerations.

<sup>1</sup> Is. lv. 8. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’  
—*Ibid.*, v. 9.



What Religion has to say on the subject we will inquire directly. At the present moment we are concerned to observe that it is Philosophy who tells the seeker after Real Truth that, if he would win his quest, he must embrace a complete change of belief, of faith, even of thought. To him the first commandment of Philosophy is nothing less than this, that upon all these matters—upon all matters—he must *change his mind*.

Such being the conclusion of modern Philosophy concerning the relations of the phenomenal to the true, turn now to consider the verdict which Religion, two thousand years ago, pronounced on the same subject. Christ's mission on Earth was to impart what He called 'the Truth.' 'Every one that is of the Truth heareth My voice.'<sup>1</sup> And this novel Truth was introduced both by Christ Himself and by His forerunner, John the Baptist, in a single word—μετανοείτε—'Change your minds!'<sup>2</sup>

It is very noteworthy that this call to a 'change of mind' was an intellectual call. It was addressed to the head, rather than to the heart. It was not said, in the first instance, Change your conduct; or even, Change your aims, or your desires, or your affections. What was said *first* was, Change your opinions. Think differently of things from what you have hitherto thought of them. Realise that you have got a totally false conception of 'the Truth'—that the thoughts which you have been thinking are not God's thoughts. Undoubtedly a change of conduct must follow immediately after this prescribed change of mind. Then we must 'bring forth fruits worthy of our change of opinions (καρπὸν ἄξιον τῆς μεταβολῆς).'<sup>3</sup> Then the man that hath two coats must impart to him that hath none; the publican must

<sup>1</sup> John xviii. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Mark i. 15, Matt. iii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. iii. 8.



exact no more than that which is appointed; the soldier must do violence to no man.<sup>1</sup> But the first injunction attributed to Christ in the New Testament—His first sermon—the very first word of preaching that He is recorded to have uttered, and, consequently, the first commandment of Christianity, is exactly the first commandment of Philosophy in relation to ‘the Truth’—*μετανοεῖτε* ‘Change your opinions!’

We are now in a position to see what must be the nature of the solution of the dilemma stated at the opening of this chapter. The mundane truths of Judaism are to ‘the Truth’ of Christianity what the physical truths of Science are to the abstract Truth of Philosophy. The conflict between ‘the love of the world’ and ‘the love of the Father’ reproduces itself in the incompatibility of the phenomenal with the real. There is the same contact, and yet the same irreconcilability, in either case. And this strange amalgamation of conjunction and opposition explains exactly why it was that Christ grafted His spiritual ‘Truth’ upon the incompatible mundane truths of Judaism. For, regarded from the philosophical point of view, Judaism is to Christianity what physical Science is to metaphysical Philosophy. Though abstract Truth contradicts, it by no means supplants, the physical truths of Science. On the contrary, the two must necessarily stand together. And the metaphysician, who rightly preaches, concerning physical truths, ‘Believe them not,’ fails not, in his relations to all physical concerns, to think and speak and act as though he believed them implicitly. For all these purposes he does believe them; and he is right in so believing them. For the world and its concerns could not go on without the belief.

<sup>1</sup> Luke iii. 11-14.

Moreover, this belief in physical truths is necessary, not only for the practical purposes of everyday life, but also for the higher purpose of ultimately acquiring the knowledge of abstract Truth. For all knowledge, as we have seen, is based upon material phenomena, and, except by studying phenomena, we can never acquire any knowledge at all. The phenomenal is, in fact, a revelation, distorted, no doubt, but still a revelation, of the inner and hidden reality,—a sort of shadow, cast by the real, which indicates the existence and the presence of that real, but which gives us neither its true dimensions nor its just proportions,—which tells us almost nothing about it except the one great fact that it is there.

Just so, too, with Religion. Though 'the love of the world' is incompatible with 'the love of the Father,' nevertheless, this lower love is doubly necessary. First, because the practical concerns of this mundane life demand its existence. They could not be conducted without it. And secondly, because the lower love is necessary as an introduction to, and a revelation of, the higher. True, it is an imperfect revelation,—distorted, and therefore in a certain sense misleading. But it is not insufficient. For though it gives us neither the breadth, nor the length, nor the depth, nor the height, of the love of God, it does reveal the one paramount fact that the divine love is there.

It follows from the foregoing that, as regarded from the philosophical point of view, Judaism is the Religion of the phenomenal, and Christianity the Religion of the real. And the amalgamation of these two incompatibilities is both justified and explained by the homologies which Science and Philosophy supply.

For a comprehensive examination of the anatomy of Truth reveals the fact that the belief that the Truth resides solely in the immaterial, and that the material universe is deceptive and misleading, is not only a dogma of Religion, but also a doctrine of Philosophy.

But if these things are so, what becomes of the truths of Science? Science, as we know, is exclusively concerned with the phenomenal. Prove that the phenomenal is unsubstantial, and does not the whole system of Science crumble away? Experience disproves the suggestion. As long as material phenomena—earth, sun, moon, and stars—continue to exist, the practical value of physical Science in relation to this phenomenal world remains. The fact that the phenomena with which Science is concerned are utterly unlike what they appear, does not affect their obedience to the physical laws, or falsify the results of scientific calculations.

And is not Religion in exactly the same plight? Judaism, as we have seen, concerns itself almost exclusively with phenomenal rewards and punishments. And from this it follows that Judaism is, for the purposes of Religion, just as necessary to our present existence, as is Science for scientific purposes. When earth and stars disappear, then, but not till then, the practical value of Science will cease; and then, but not till then, the practical value of Judaism also will come to an end.

And here it is of extreme interest to observe that the conclusion thus deduced from philosophic considerations is a proposition which we have direct from Christ Himself. For it is confirmed by the highly noteworthy, but apparently unnoticed, distinction, in respect of duration, which Christ expressly draws between

Judaism and Christianity. Judaism—the Religion of the phenomenal—will last only with the phenomenal. Of ‘the law and the prophets,’—that is to say, the Religion of the Old Testament,—Christ says, ‘Verily I say unto you, *Till heaven and earth pass away*, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law.’<sup>1</sup> But of Christianity—the Religion of the real—Christ declares that it will survive the phenomenal, and continue into eternity:—‘Heaven and earth shall pass away, *but My words shall not pass away.*’<sup>2</sup> In other words, Judaism is the Religion of time; Christianity, the Religion of eternity. And in the distinction thus drawn by Christ Himself have we not the strongest confirmation of the interpretation which, throughout, we have been applying to the Judaic Religion,—that Judaism concerns itself exclusively, or all but exclusively, with the affairs of this mundane existence, while Christianity busies itself with the affairs of the life to come? For consider what Christ’s words mean. The law and the prophets shall continue till heaven and earth pass away; but ‘My words’—Christianity—shall never pass away. While Christianity will survive the wreck of the material Universe,—when ‘heaven and earth shall pass away,’—Judaism, the Religion of this life, the Religion of the phenomenal, will, on Christ’s own showing, be, in respect of duration, coextensive, but coterminous, with the phenomenal.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv. 35, Mark xiii. 31, Luke xxi. 33. It is to be observed that Christ here uses the strongest and most emphatic form of negative known to the Greek language,—the so-called double negative:—οἱ δὲ λόγοι μου οὐ μὴ παρέλθωσι.

## CHAPTER XIV

### TIME AND ETERNITY

IN order to enable us to give a practical value to the conclusion reached in the last chapter, that, as regarded from the widest—the philosophical—point of view, the positions which Judaism and Christianity respectively occupy in the anatomy of Truth are expressed by saying that the former is the Religion of the phenomenal and the latter the Religion of the real, it is necessary to look for answers to two questions. First, what, for the purposes of Religion, is the essential distinction between the phenomenal and the real? And second, what is the connecting link between the two? At present we find ourselves situated in a phenomenal world. The object of Religion is to bring us into touch with the real, so as eventually to transport us into the sphere of the real. How is this transition to be effected? To answer this question is to solve the ultimate problem presented to us by the anatomy of Truth.

Turning first to the former of these two questions, it is easy to see that the one great defect of all phenomenal things is that they will not last. Everything material is gradually fading away. Little by little even the 'everlasting hills' are yielding to the incessant assaults of frost and heat, of wind and water, of storm and tempest; and astronomers know well enough that the



day will surely come when the world itself will vanish into the imperceptible,

‘ And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,  
The cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
And, like an insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind.’<sup>1</sup>

This is the verdict, not merely of the visionary and the poet, but also of sober-minded science and deep-reasoning philosophy. It is also the verdict of the Christian Religion. While Judaism, moving in the lower physical plane, treats of the relations of God to man in connection with the concerns of this mundane existence, Christianity, moving in the higher spiritual plane, takes exception to that method of treatment for this very reason, that the phenomenal will not last—‘The things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal’;<sup>2</sup> therefore ‘lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where moth and rust doth consume, and where thieves break through and steal’;<sup>3</sup> but ‘make for yourselves purses *which wax not old*, a treasure in the heavens *that faileth not*, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth.’<sup>4</sup>

Thus the essential distinction which Christianity draws between this life and the next—between ‘earth’ and ‘heaven’—is that, whilst this world and everything appertaining to it is ephemeral and temporal, heaven is eternal. The transition from earth to heaven is the passage from time to eternity. ‘Heaven’ and ‘eternity’ are, in the Christian vocabulary, convertible terms.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare, *Tempest*, act iv. sc. 1.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. vi. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Luke xii. 33.

Now, it is very easy to speak of eternity; and, as a matter of fact, the term is one which is frequently on the lips of religious teachers of all denominations. But that many of those who thus habitually play with the word have a very inadequate conception of its meaning is proved by the paraphrases by which they endeavour to explain it. Thus the expression 'when time shall be no more' is a formula which is not infrequently to be heard from the pulpit. But a moment's reflection will suffice to show that such a formula betrays a complete misunderstanding of the idea intended to be conveyed. For the phrase is self-contradictory. The word 'when' means 'a time when.' It is the abbreviated equivalent of Milton's somewhat ponderous phrase 'what time'—

'He it was whose guile,  
Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
Had cast him out from Heaven.'<sup>1</sup>

If, then, 'when' means 'a time when,' what becomes of the paraphrase? How can there be a time when time shall not be? We have but to ask the question in order to see that the paraphrase is suicidal. It is obvious that, if there be such a thing as eternity, we must find some other paraphrase by which to describe it. For the paraphrase before us is self-annihilating.

What, then, are we to say of eternity? Is there really any such thing? Is it anything more substantial than a sounding phrase? And has it any existence outside the imagination of the preacher and his hearers? Religion, it is true, employs the term glibly enough. But what has Philosophy to say on the subject? Probably most of us, when we are told of

<sup>1</sup> *Paradise Lost*, i. 34-37.

'the passage from time to eternity,' are secretly infected with a feeling of doubt as to whether such a change will ever really befall us. Is eternity a thing with which we have seriously to reckon? Is it a thing known to Philosophy? And if so, what, exactly, is it? In order to enable us to obtain reliable answers to these questions let us revert for a moment to first principles.

We think of things in two ways—in relation to their coexistences and in relation to their sequences. The former of these two modes of thought we call Space; the latter, Time. Now, in relation to coexistence (or space) there are two categories of thought; the one we call Motion, and the other, Status. And these two categories are mutual opposites, status being simply the absence of motion. Are there two corresponding categories of thought in relation to sequence?

At first sight, no doubt, it would seem that the answer to this question must be in the negative. Our conception of time necessarily involves the idea of progression; and progression necessarily involves motion. Therefore our ideas of time are necessarily confined to moving time. The very phrase 'stationary time' is a contradiction in terms—like stationary motion. It does not, and cannot, enter our thoughts. There is no such thing.

It will, however, be at once observed that Philosophy does not present us with either a complete or a symmetrical scheme of thought unless and until she provides us with the idea of absence of progression. If the conception of coexistence is capable of furnishing the materials for the two categories of thought known as motion and absence of motion (or status), the conception of sequence ought to be equally capable of

furnishing the materials for two corresponding categories. Until these two categories have been furnished it cannot be said that the whole domain of possible thought has been filled. There is here a whole department of thought left empty—a psychic vacuum. And Nature, who abhors a vacuum, cannot rest until this vacuum has been removed by filling the vacant department. No system of philosophy, therefore, can be called complete which fails to supply this missing factor; for, in its absence, a whole department of the psychic universe is wanting.

If to this statement it be objected that the idea of absence of time is not a possible subject of thought because it is impossible to think of time as stopping, the answer is that so also, as was shown in the last chapter, is it impossible to think of motion in space as stopping. Both ideas, in this respect, stand upon the same footing. Neither of them is any more, and neither any less, unthinkable than the other. From all of which it follows that, from the philosophical point of view, the absence of motion in sequence is a necessity of thought. We cannot get rid of the conception any more than we can get rid of the idea of absence of motion in space. If, therefore, by 'eternity' Religion means what Philosophy means by absence of motion in sequence, the answer of Philosophy to the question, Is there such a thing as eternity? is that there must be.

Such being the philosophical aspect of the case, turn now to Religion. What *does* Religion really mean by 'eternity'? As we have seen, the terms 'eternity' and 'heaven' are to Religion convertible terms. In order, therefore, to ascertain the meaning which Religion attaches to the term 'eternity,' let us turn

for a moment to consider what Religion means by the term 'heaven.'

At a very early stage in the history of Religion heaven was identified with the sky. And from this identification arose the idea that the heaven of Religion is a region lying somewhere above the clouds. For thousands of years the notion that heaven is a place was universally entertained, and it is still widely accepted even at the present day.

In course of time, however, the more intellectual members of the religious community began to perceive that such a notion was crude and ill-considered. As thought advanced, the materialistic element which the conception involved, however agreeable to the painter and the poet, found decreasing encouragement from the researches of Science and the abstractions of Philosophy. Moreover, even apart from these considerations, the localisation of heaven was felt to involve very considerable geographical—or rather, chorographical—difficulties. These sceptical influences have gradually asserted themselves with increasing emphasis; and though it is probable that most of us still secretly cherish the notion that heaven is a place—a better land, a radiant shore; and though it is certain that painters and poets will long continue so to depict it—indeed, we have so referred to it more than once in the foregoing chapters, and the Bible itself describes it by the metaphors of 'a country,'<sup>1</sup> 'a city,'<sup>2</sup> 'My Father's house'<sup>3</sup>—there is no doubt that among the leaders of religious thought the belief in a localised heaven has now been more or less abandoned.

It is strange that men should have approached the truth of this matter with such tardy and reluctant

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> John xiv. 2.



steps; for Christ Himself revealed the true facts of the case in language which is neither ambiguous nor obscure. On being questioned as to when the kingdom of God should come, He seized the opportunity to explain what the kingdom of God really is. 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation'—it is not a thing that can be seen;—'neither shall they say, Lo here, or lo there':—it is not a question of 'here,' or 'there,' or any 'where'; it is not a question of place at all;—'for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.'<sup>1</sup> Heaven—the kingdom of God—is not an external region, but an internal condition; not an altitude, but an attitude. To borrow the formula in which the late Professor Henry Drummond admirably summarised this portion of the Christian doctrine, 'heaven is not a place but a state.'

Observe in this formula the word 'state,' and compare it with the word 'status,' which we have so repeatedly employed in connection with the term 'motion.' It will be noticed that in either case the fundamental idea expressed is the absence of motion. 'Status' means the absence of motion in space; 'state' means the absence of motion in sequence. And thus state is to time exactly what status is to motion. The four terms together constitute a complete and exhaustive statement of all the possibilities of thought as regards motion, whether in respect of coexistence or of sequence.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvii. 20, 21.

<sup>2</sup> 'State' is defined by the lexicographer as 'the circumstances or condition of a being or thing at any given time' (*Webster, sub verbo*). The word, in fact, expresses condition, considered irrespectively altogether of time. If, therefore, it be objected to the foregoing argument that thought cannot get away from the idea of time, and that consequently the idea of absence of time, or independence of time, is an impossible subject of thought, the very existence of the word 'state' disposes of the objection.

Having thus considered the meaning which Religion attaches to the term 'eternity' by reference to the convertible term 'heaven,' let us now retranslate these two terms, by substituting for 'heaven,' in the formula 'heaven is not a place but a state,' its philosophical and theological equivalent 'eternity,' and we then get the formula 'eternity is a state.' And in this formula we find the identification of the missing factor of which we are in search. Instead of 'Time—Eternity' write 'Time—State'; and we then have the four required factors:—

as regards coexistence, . . . . Motion—Status;  
 as regards sequence, . . . . Time — State;  
 which, as we have just seen, together constitute a complete, exhaustive, and symmetrical philosophical scheme of thought.

It may, perhaps, be objected that we gain very little by thus completing the scheme of Philosophy. As a matter of fact we gain a great deal, both for philosophic, and also for religious, purposes. More than half the mistakes that are made in life are due to a failure to call things by their right names. In solving a problem the first thing to be done, in order to ensure a correct solution, is to reduce it to its simplest terms. Suppose, for instance, that we write down the four elements of our philosophic scheme thus:—

Motion—Status

Time—Eternity.

Then it is easy to fall into the error into which thousands of philosophers and theologians have fallen before us, and which has done more than any other error to obscure one of the most important conceptions of Religion. Ask any hundred men of average intellectual attainments what is the meaning of 'eternity'

in this formula, and we shall probably receive a hundred identical answers. Eternity, they will tell us, means endless time. Well, let us accept this answer for the moment, and re-write our formula accordingly. It then becomes

Motion—Status (*i.e.* absence of motion in space);

Time—Endless Time (*i.e.* continuance of motion in sequence).

A single glance at this scheme will reveal the fact that it is vicious and unsound, for it is neither symmetrical nor exhaustive. Not symmetrical, because, as 'status' in the first line means 'absence of motion in space,' what is wanted in the second line, in order to make the scheme symmetrical, is, not 'continuance of motion in sequence,' but 'absence of motion in sequence.' Not exhaustive, because, without the term 'absence of motion in sequence,' a whole department of thought is missing, and the scheme is incomplete. It is obvious, therefore, when we come to think of it, that, as status, in relation to space, means absence of motion, what is wanted in respect of sequence, in order to make the scheme symmetrical and exhaustive, is absence of motion. 'Endless time,' therefore, is exactly the opposite of what is required. And it is equally obvious that if, instead of importing into the philosophic scheme the exclusively theological term 'eternity,' we had inserted its philosophical (and theological) equivalent 'state,' we should have avoided this mistake and all the ensuing errors which it entails.

What, then, is eternity? Eternity is state. And state is timelessness. These two, time and state, are reciprocals. Either is the negation of the other. Whatever time is *not*, that is state. State, therefore, is existence

without progression—condition without change. It is the generic name for everything whose essence it is that it changes not. It is that which in mathematics we term a constant; in mechanics, equilibrium; in physics, stability; in economics, security; in meteorology, calm; and in Religion, peace—the peace of God, the peace of eternity.

From the foregoing considerations two conclusions of great practical importance to Religion arise with regard to eternity. In the first place, it is clear that eternity is no mere figment created by Religion, but is an actual reality—a philosophic necessity. When we hear it spoken of by Religion we are often apt to dismiss it, perhaps as chimerical, certainly as problematical. It has been christened the *Grand Peut-être*. But here, as everywhere, Religion is in the right. Eternity attests its own existence by claiming an allotted portion of the domain of intelligence. There is room for it in every complete system of thought; and no scheme of thought that can be devised is complete without it. There is a place for it in the economy of existence. It is as necessary in relation to sequence, in order to complete the psychical sphere of existence, as is the conception of status in relation to space. We can only get rid of it by annihilating—or, at least, ignoring—an integral part of the Universe.

And, in the second place, eternity, as thus understood, has a totally different meaning from that too often attributed to it by those who rightly contrast it with time, but wrongly forget what that contrast involves. The ideas of never-ending and never-having-begun, which we habitually attach to it, are quite misplaced. How little they have to do with it, can easily be shown by an illustration. If eternity means

endlessness it must be endless in both directions—endless in the past as well as endless in the future; that is to say, without beginning as well as without end. But when we say of a dying man that he is ‘about to enter eternity,’ we are clearly thinking (if we are thinking at all) of only half an eternity—an eternity in the future cut off from the eternity in the past by commencing at a present or future date. But half an eternity, if eternity means endless time, is absurd. We might just as well speak of half an infinity. For eternity, if it means endless time, is infinite; and we cannot, if that be its meaning, bisect eternity, any more than we can bisect infinity.

The fallacy is still more clearly exposed by the expression, so often used, ‘on the brink of eternity.’ If eternity means state, this expression is right enough. But if it means infinite time, the expression is self-contradictory. For the very essence of infinity is that it has no brink, or margin, or boundary of any sort. And thus we are brought back once more to our original conclusion. Everlasting—‘from everlasting to everlasting’<sup>1</sup>—is merely an extension of time. And eternity, as we have seen, is not extension of time, but absence of time.

If it be desired to still further illustrate the soundness of the proposition for which we are contending, we have only to remember that to say that the formula ‘time—eternity’ is equivalent to the formula ‘time—everlasting time,’ is about the same thing as to allege that ‘motion—status’ is the equivalent of ‘motion—perpetual motion.’ In other words, to identify ‘eternity’ with ‘everlasting time’ is to fall into the very same fallacy as that of which we should be guilty if we were

<sup>1</sup> Ps. xc. 2.



to allege that 'status' is the same thing as 'perpetual motion.'

From all of which it follows that everlasting continuance does not necessarily constitute an essential ingredient of eternity. There is no reason in the nature of things why eternity should not begin and end and begin again, with intermittent periods of time in between, just as status is periodically converted into motion.

Moreover, eternity may begin at one time for one person and at another time for another. From which, again, it follows that time runs concurrently with eternity. And in this consideration is to be found the explanation of the fact that God is both 'everlasting' and 'eternal.' For God is the God of the whole Universe—the God of the phenomenal as well as the God of the real; the God of all time—'from everlasting to everlasting'—as well as the God of eternity; the God of Judaism, as well as the God of Christianity.

We are now in sight of the answer to the first of the two questions proposed at the opening of this chapter. What, for the purposes of Religion, is the essential distinction between the phenomenal and the real? The answer to this question is that when we say that the phenomenal belongs to time and the real to eternity, the distinction which we are really drawing is between sequence and state. The phenomenal is in the category of progression as regards sequence; the real is in the category of state. And it is to be observed that the doctrine of Religion which thus connects evanescence with progression and permanence with state is a truly philosophic doctrine. Wherever there is progression there is always terminality. Evolution, which in its widest sense is merely another name for

progression, is invariably followed, sooner or later, by dissolution. The only possibility of permanence is, therefore, to be sought in the category of state. And this is why (heaven being not a place but a state) Religion is truly philosophic in recommending us to 'lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven that faileth not.'

What, now, is the practical effect, so far as Religion is concerned, of the conclusions thus reached? In order to find and understand the answer to this question, we must proceed to consider the second of our two opening interrogatories:—What is the connecting link between the phenomenal and the real, and how is the transition from the one to the other to be effected? In other words, what is 'treasure in heaven,' and how are we to 'lay it up for ourselves'?

It is evident from what has gone before that this is only another way of asking how it is possible to bring time to a standstill so far as we ourselves are personally concerned. Time being progression and eternity being state, the question resolves itself into the problem of how to detach ourselves from the vehicle of the temporal so as to land on the platform of the eternal. With a view to the solution of this problem let us consider a little more in detail what we really mean by time.

What is the normal speed of time? We often speak of time flying, and sometimes of time passing slowly. Are these merely metaphorical expressions? Or do we, when we speak thus, actually mean what we say? Does the speed of time really vary? And if so, what is the normal standard of the speed of time? And what is the method of measurement by which this normal speed is to be determined?

In considering these questions it is first to be noted that, although astronomers have succeeded in carrying the science of the mensuration of time to a degree of accuracy sufficient for all practical purposes, it is impossible to obtain a truly accurate measure of time; for the simple reason that there is no unit of measurement that is really constant. Astronomers in measuring time take two factors into consideration; the one is the speed with which the Earth rotates on its axis, which constitutes the measure of 'sidereal time'; and the other the orbital rate at which the Earth travels round the Sun, constituting the measure of 'solar time.' The former of these two factors is ascertained principally by reference to the so-called fixed stars; the latter, by reference to the Sun.

As regards axial rotation, if the Earth rotated at an absolutely fixed rate of speed, it would be possible, subject to any minute errors that might be introduced by the movements of the stars, to ascertain with extreme accuracy the time occupied by an axial rotation of the Earth, and thence to determine the length of a sidereal day and of a sidereal hour. But the Earth's rate of axial rotation is not constant. The ocean tides act as a brake which is constantly retarding the Earth's rate of rotation. And, as this retarding influence is always present, it follows that each sidereal day and each sidereal hour is a little longer than every preceding day and hour.

As regards the Earth's orbital velocity, this is very far from being constant. The speed with which the Earth travels round the Sun is affected by the positions, for the time being, occupied by the other planets, and (probably) also by variations in the comparative density or rarity of the Ether in different parts of space. The

Earth's orbital speed, moreover, varies from day to day and from hour to hour accordingly as the Earth is approaching, or receding from, perihelion point, and according to the orbital position which the Earth happens to occupy at each particular moment. And as the length of a solar day, and consequently of a solar hour, varies with the orbital distance which the Earth travels during each axial rotation, assuming that the Earth's rate—or, rather, decline—of axial speed is constant, it follows that, for all, or some, of the above-mentioned reasons, some solar hours are longer, and some shorter, than others. Indeed, if we could measure time with real accuracy, we should find that in a period of, say, a hundred years, very few solar hours, if any, are of exactly the same length.

But, apart altogether from these perturbations, which, for practical purposes, are neutralised by the device known to astronomers as 'the equation of time,' ethereal friction has always been, and still is, constantly retarding the Earth's orbital speed, with the result that each year, and consequently each equated solar hour, is longer than every preceding year and equated hour.

Of course, these variations are excessively minute—so minute that for all practical and scientific purposes they are virtually imperceptible, though the retardation of the Earth's orbital speed caused by ethereal friction is, in the opinion of some astronomers, sufficient to show already its effects in the relative nearness to one another of the orbits of the older planets.<sup>1</sup> But however negligible they may be to Science, to Religion and to Philosophy these variations are all-important, because they are real.

<sup>1</sup> Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*, p. 528 (5th Edn.).



It follows from the above that, though astronomical phenomena supply units of time sufficiently accurate for the mensuration of time for all practical and scientific purposes, when we come to consider time from the philosophic point of view—time in relation to eternity—those units are found to be variable, and therefore unreliable and worthless. In seeking, therefore, to solve the problem whether it is possible by any means to bring time to a standstill such as will constitute eternity, we must seek some other basis for the mensuration of time than that adopted by Science.

It follows, too, from what was said in an earlier part of this chapter, that the problem of bringing time to a standstill is a personal problem to be solved by each individual for himself. As we have seen, time may end for one individual at one date and for another individual at another. Two individuals may enter eternity at very different times.

What follows? If the problem of bringing time to a standstill is a purely personal problem, the unit of measurement of time to be employed in the solution of the problem must be personal also. For each individual, time, so far as its relations to eternity are concerned, is going fast or slowly, or is stopping altogether, according to that individual's perception of time or state, as the case may be. And thus we arrive at the conclusion that, for the highest philosophical purposes, the only true unit for the mensuration of time is one which for scientific purposes would be unreliable and worthless, namely, each individual's perception of the rate, or absence, of progression. And this brings us in sight of the answer to our second question. The method—and the only method—of detaching ourselves from time and entering eternity is, by some means or



other, to resolve ourselves into a state of unconsciousness of the progression of time.

Possibly it may be suggested that such a state of unconsciousness may be induced by death. But, if this be possible, it can only be on the principle enunciated in the formula, *Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant*. Undoubtedly, if there is any form of death which amounts to annihilation, it must be admitted that such a death would induce a complete forgetfulness of time, and would, therefore, to that extent satisfy the essential conditions of our definition of eternity. But to designate such a time-forgetfulness as that by the name of eternity is much the same thing as to convert a thriving region into a deserted wilderness and call it peace. When Religion speaks of eternity, what is meant is not eternal stagnation, but eternal life,—a life which must be taken to be keenly and vitally conscious. No system, therefore, for securing the obliteration of the consciousness of progression, which is based upon any form of suicide or death, can be of any avail for the purpose of solving Religion's problem of passing from time to eternity. What is wanted is some process which will eliminate the consciousness of progression without destroying the conscious vitality.

How is this to be done? In approaching this problem we see at once that, whatever may be the rate which Science may choose to regard as being the normal speed of time, and however narrow may be the limits, if any, of variation from that speed which Science, for her own purposes, may choose to admit as recognisable, it is certain that time, as measured by the philosophic unit of measurement, exhibits wide variations in its rate of progression; and further, that there are certain well-known conditions which

accelerate, and others which retard, the perceived flight of time.

These conditions are intimately connected with the emotions, whether excited directly through the senses or indirectly through the imagination. Joy and happiness accelerate the apparent passage of time; pain and sorrow retard it. Thus it is a truism familiar to every one that time flies rapidly during periods of keen enjoyment; and every one must endorse the truth of the poet's 'winged hours of bliss.'<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the greatest interpreter of human nature and human experience has placed it on record that sorrow and sadness check the apparent speed of time:—

'Ay me! sad hours seem long.

What sadness lengthens Romeo's hours?'<sup>2</sup>

Or, again,

'GAUNT. What is six winters? They are quickly gone.

BOLINGBROKE. To men in joy; but grief makes one hour ten.'<sup>3</sup>

But, as we saw when discussing Motion and Status, the retardation of motion does not really constitute any approach to status. For motion and status are incommensurable. The difference between them is a difference not of degree but of kind. And so, too, with sequence. No 'clog upon the wheels of time' will ever convert progression into state. For here also the difference is of kind, not of degree; and the retardation of time does not really betoken an approach to state any more than the retardation of motion constitutes an approximation to status. Neither to retard time until its progress becomes imperceptible, nor to

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Campbell, *Pleasures of Hope*, 377.

<sup>2</sup> Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act i. sc. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Shakespeare, *King Richard II.*, act i. sc. 3.

accelerate it until its speed grows unimaginable, is to convert time into eternity. For hours that flag and hours that fly are time still. What is wanted, in order to cut us adrift from time altogether, is some influence that can render us independent of time by making us indifferent to its rate of progression—something that can at once perform both of the two operations of retardation and acceleration, that can both compress long into short and expand short into long. If only we can possess ourselves of such a talisman, then we become wholly independent of time and wholly indifferent to its flight. Then fast and slow become empty names to us, and sequence disappears. Then we detach ourselves from time completely, and enter the state of eternity.

Is such a talisman to be found? Yes; there is one emotion, and one only, belonging to human nature, which, when keenly excited, does possess, though in an incipient and imperfect degree, something of the mysterious power of annihilating in this way the sense of time and sequence. Love, when experienced in a very intense degree, does confer upon its possessor a kind of foretaste of this transporting faculty. True, the exercise of this faculty is far indeed from the measure of completeness. True, even the strongest love of which humanity has as yet proved itself capable, is too weak to achieve the herculean feat of obliterating altogether the sense of time. But, in spite of these imperfections, love furnishes the clue to the solution of the problem. For love exhibits unmistakably a tendency to blunt the sense of time, however imperfectly this function may be performed. Undoubtedly it is one of the properties of this strange rapture that it induces a state of consciousness in

which, whilst the vital energy is stimulated to the highest pitch of intensity, the sense of sequence becomes blurred and indistinct.

Possibly there are not many who can attest from personal experience the truth of this assertion. For, apparently, the faculty of loving very intensely—or, at all events, the opportunity for the intense exercise of the faculty—occurs but seldom. But those who have ever known what it is to be utterly absorbed by an overmastering, overwhelming, passionate love, are conscious that during the continuance of that condition the sense of time disappears. To love truly and really, with all the heart and soul and mind, to lose oneself in love, is, to some extent at all events, to leave the category of sequence and approach the category of state,—is to exchange time for a foretaste of eternity.

This is no mere fiction of the novelist or the poet, though it is the common property of both. It is, to those who have experienced it, one of the best attested facts in the world; and every one who has ever genuinely loved will instantly recognise how sublimely true a description of real love is contained in the words, ‘And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her.’<sup>1</sup>

The power of love to distort the apparent speed of time is not confined to the compression of a long period into a short. It extends also to the converse process of expanding short into long. It can magnify as well as minify. This latter faculty is well described by an author, now all but forgotten, but who was widely read in his day, and who contrived to convey, under

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxix. 20.

cover of a somewhat pedantic style, a large amount of truth and worldly wisdom :—

‘Love : what a volume in a word, an ocean in a tear,  
A seventh heaven in a glance, a whirlwind in a sigh,  
The lightning in a touch, a *millennium* in a moment.’<sup>1</sup>

No one can fail to recognise in these lines a vivid picture of the magnifying power of this strange transport. We must, no doubt, make all necessary allowance for poetic inflation ; but even so, the truth of the poet’s words will be readily admitted by every one who has ever tasted the bitter-sweet of a passionate affection. To love, all things are possible. It can contract seven years into a few days. It can expand a moment into an age. In the words of Milton, when describing ideal love, as exemplified by the two first lovers, ‘imparadised in one another’s arms,’

‘With thee conversing I forget all time.’<sup>2</sup>

Love such as that of which we are speaking—love of the highest intensity experienced in human nature—is inexplicable and indescribable. No one can explain, even to himself, why he so loves, or what it is that he loves. Indeed, men sometimes love like this against their judgment, and even against their will. For such love it is impossible to account in any rational terms. We can only say of it, with the poet :—

‘It is not for duty—though that may be owed ;  
It is not for beauty—though that be bestowed ;  
But all that I care for, and all that I know,  
Is that, without wherefore, I worship thee so.’<sup>3</sup>

Neither can any one describe it to another. It is so inexpressibly sweet that in its presence description fails and faints ; and even the fondest terms that

<sup>1</sup> Martin F. Tupper, *Proverbial Philosophy ; Of Love*.

<sup>2</sup> *Paradise Lost*, iv, 506, 639.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Lytton.



language can bestow upon it—joy, delight, ecstasy, even rapture itself—grow pale and colourless.

Now, it is a highly significant fact that two of the most prominent attributes which Religion ascribes to God are the attributes of Love and of Timelessness. On the one hand, 'God is love.'<sup>1</sup> And, on the other hand, with Him 'one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.'<sup>2</sup> We have only to compare the combination of love and timelessness thus ascribed to God with Jacob's seven years of service compressed by love into 'a few days,' and the lover's 'moment' expanded into an age, to see that, as regards timelessness, human love and divine are essentially the same. In either case there is the same indifference—the same superiority—to time. Both are the same in kind. They differ only in degree. And when we turn to consider the question of degree, we find every reason to believe that the love of God can accomplish all that Religion claims for it. How immeasurably does the keenest human affection fall short of the standard of the love of God! Whatever love may be in its fullest perfection, its rarest virtue, its most refined quintessence—that is God. And if the love of God so far surpasses human love, its potentialities must be correspondingly greater too. In the case of human love we know that the extent of that 'sweet forgetting' which obliterates time varies with the intensity of the love. If, then, the comparatively feeble force of the strongest human love is capable of such intensity as baffles description, what shall we say of the love of God? If one human being can inspire in another a love which can compress seven years of disappointment and hope deferred into a few days—which

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 8.

can 'forget all time'—is it to be doubted that such a love as 'the love of Christ which passeth knowledge' is capable of expanding one day into a thousand years, and of concentrating a thousand years into one day? And what is this but to resolve time into timelessness? Have we not in such a love every element that is required for the complete annihilation of time? It satisfies the requirements of Philosophy at the same time that it fulfils the declarations of Religion. To Philosophy and Theology alike such a love is the connecting link between time and eternity.

It is not difficult to find confirmation, both theological and philosophic, of the foregoing interpretation of the relations of love to eternity. For theological confirmation we have not far to look, for the interpretation receives an express sanction and authority from the lips of Christ Himself:—

'And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted Him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And He said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.'<sup>1</sup>

So that, on Christ's own showing, love to God and man is sufficient to ensure eternal life. Love which 'never faileth'<sup>2</sup> is the 'treasure in heaven that faileth not.'<sup>3</sup> And thus love is the passport to eternal life. Love *is* eternity.

The interpretation, moreover, receives further theological confirmation from the fact that it throws a flood of light upon some of the leading features in the scheme of Religion. It explains why 'the first and

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 25-28.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xii. 33.

great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God'; and why 'the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'<sup>1</sup> It explains why it is that 'on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'<sup>2</sup> It explains also Paul's superlative eulogy of love—a eulogy which might almost be called extravagant were it not for the fact that love is the patent of eternal life. And it adds a yet deeper meaning to the unfathomable mystery that 'he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,' and that 'he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love.'<sup>3</sup>

It explains also the very remarkable distinction between the Judaic and the Christian conceptions of love:—

'Ye have heard that it was said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy<sup>4</sup>; but I say unto you, Love your enemies . . . that ye may be sons of your Father which is in heaven. . . . Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.'<sup>5</sup>

Judaism, the Religion of the temporal, was content with the lower and narrower kind of love—love for our lovers. It was reserved for Christianity, the Religion of eternity, to inculcate the higher and more refined species of love—love for our enemies. As we have seen, even the most intense love of which humanity is capable is unable to effect more than a partial and imperfect obliteration of time. In order to achieve a perfect transition from time to eternity nothing less than a perfect love is required—such a love as that of our Father Which is in heaven, 'Who is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.'<sup>6</sup> Consequently, for the purpose of acquiring the eternal life promised

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxii. 37-39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John iv. 16, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Deut. xxiii. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. v. 43-48.

<sup>6</sup> Luke vi. 35.

by Christianity it is necessary to cultivate that perfect form of love which embraces enemies as well as friends, and which, therefore, is so closely akin to the love of God that to possess it will make us 'perfect even as our heavenly Father is perfect.'

Turning now to inquire for philosophic confirmation, we find that the doctrine is supported by the considerations discussed in the last chapter, on the Phenomenal and the Real. It will be recollected that the phrase 'time and eternity' is only another mode of classifying the phenomenal and the real. The temporal is the phenomenal; the eternal is but another name for the real. When, therefore, we say that love is the one and only connecting link between the temporal and the eternal, we are alleging that there is a connection between love and the real, closer and more intimate than that which belongs to any member of the phenomenal universe. In other words, we are asserting that love belongs to the category of the real rather than—or, at least, as much as—to the category of the phenomenal.

That this intimacy on the part of love with reality is no mere figure of speech, but an actuality, is attested by the fact that love, as we have seen, exhibits that strange quality of mystery which is exclusively characteristic of the real. There is no such thing as mystery in the purely phenomenal. In this department of the universe we find traces of law, order, arrangement, method, beauty, wisdom, power—everything but mystery. It is only when we seek to penetrate through the phenomenal to the reality which lies behind it that mystery makes its appearance. Whenever we come in sight of mystery, we may be sure that we are approaching the real.

Now, it is very material to observe that love—even human love—does exhibit unmistakable traces of this mystery, so alien to the constitution of the phenomenal, so exclusively characteristic of the real. The irrationality, or, rather, the super-rationality, of love—‘love’s reason is without reason’;<sup>1</sup> its inexplicable blindness; its unreasoning fondness; its medley of contradictions and inconsistencies; its strange amalgamation of sweet and bitter; its wealth of self-sacrifice, and its selfish jealousy; its self-suppression and its tyranny; its untraceable source; its unexplained origin—always unbidden, often actually forbidden; its inability to give any rational account of itself, to tell us why it comes or how it works, transforming with creative touch unloveliness into beauty, the commonplace into the sublime; and, above all, this very faculty of creativeness, which is specially distinctive of the real, and of which the phenomenal possesses not a trace, by virtue of which love creates its own world and sustains its own life, finding increase in absence, and feeding upon itself; and, finally, its mysterious power of time-forgetfulness;—all these are strains of its celestial pedigree, tokens of its high descent, unmistakable traces of a lineage that belongs less to the phenomenal than to the real. Or, to shift the metaphor, love, as we know it, is an echo of the voice of Reality, calling to us from the timeless shore,—a whisper breathed from the heart of the Real into the dull ear of the phenomenal. He, therefore, who loves, is learning a language that tells of eternity, teaching, in honeyed tones, to forget the phenomenal *and know the Real*. And thus Philosophy confirms and endorses Religion’s central doctrine—so profoundly mystical, and yet so pro-

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, act iv. sc. 2.



foundly true—that ‘love is of God; and that every one that loveth is born of God, *and knoweth God.*’<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, this closeness of the relationship of love to the real has always been felt, even when it has been least understood. From the earliest ages mankind has persisted in assigning to love a place amongst the immortals. And this unconscious unanimity is not without a certain evidential value of its own. We are generally pretty safe in accepting a belief which rests upon a human instinct, especially when that instinct happens to be widely prevalent. And here the instinct is almost universal. Apart altogether from any theological doctrine on the subject, men have always, naturally and instinctively, classed love as divine.

‘Love is of God.’ The pagan instinct, groping blindly amongst phenomena in its search for truth, detected in love’s preternatural attributes an inherent spark of divinity, and at once proceeded to the inevitable apotheosis, translating love’s sweetness into a Venus, and arming love-militant with a Cupid’s quiver and bow, thereby expressing the germ of truth, which it had discovered, by the imperfect and distorted formula ‘Love is a god.’ Revelation, looking down from heaven, breathed upon this instinctive belief the quickening breath of inspiration, and raised it up, perfected and glorified, in the inverted formula ‘God is love.’

Possibly, it may be objected to the foregoing argument, that the human love of which we have been speaking is limited to sexual love, and that that is not the species of love to which Religion appeals, or which can properly be brought into comparison with the love of God. In considering such an objection it must, of course, be admitted that human sexual love, standing

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 7.

alone, is a very imperfect type of the love of God. Undoubtedly, if we would place before ourselves the truest attainable picture of divine love, we must include in it, besides sexual love, every other species of human affection—love of parents, of children, of friends, even of enemies. And when we have done all this we shall still have before us a type which falls short of its unimaginable antitype as much as—even more than—the fugitive flash of an electric spark falls short of the radiant splendour of the sun.

But, even if the supposed objection were based upon fact, which it is not,—for the foregoing observations are applicable to every kind of love, though, of course, in a degree that varies with the intensity of the love,—yet, even so, the comparison which we have been drawing between human love and divine is perfectly legitimate. For it is easy to show that Religion does in fact regard sexual love as emblematic of the love of God; and, further, that Religion's action in so doing is amply justified by both scientific and philosophic considerations.

On the question of fact, both the Judaic and the Christian Codes furnish evidence in support of our proposition. The Old Testament proclaims that, 'as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.'<sup>1</sup> And that the point of this comparison is to be found, not in the mere fact of the rejoicing, but in the kind of joy that is experienced, is significantly attested by the Hebrew words, which, literally translated, mean 'with the joy of the bridegroom over the bride shall thy God rejoice over thee.'<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is clear that Judaism regards sexual love as emanating directly from God Himself; for it defines

<sup>1</sup> Is. lxii. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* (marginal rendering).

it as 'a very flame of the Lord,'<sup>1</sup> and attributes to it qualities which belong to God only,—'strong as death; inflexible as the grave.'<sup>2</sup>

In the New Testament, the coming of the Son of Man is foretold by Christ Himself under the allegory of the coming of the bridegroom.<sup>3</sup> So, too, the love of Christ for the Church is set before us as the true ideal of marital love:—'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church.'<sup>4</sup> And the figure of 'the marriage supper of the Lamb'<sup>5</sup> is familiar to every one.

It is clear, therefore, that Judaism and Christianity alike regard the lover's love as a type and symbol of the love of God. And it would have been strange indeed if this were not so,—if Religion had excluded from the picture of divine love this strongest, deepest, and most sublime of all human passions. How, it may well be asked, could the Code of a Religion that is built upon love possibly be complete, if it did not include in its canon the perennial drama of love-militant and love-triumphant?

When we turn to scientific and philosophic considerations, it is not difficult to find abundant reasons which fully justify the action of Religion in thus regarding sexual love as emblematic of divine love.

In the first place, from the practical point of view sexual love is the most intense form of love of which human nature is susceptible. To borrow once more the words of an author from whom we have already made a citation:—'Love is a sweet idolatry, enslaving all the soul.'<sup>6</sup> No other kind of love can at all compete with sexual love as an obsession of the entire

<sup>1</sup> *The Song of Songs*, viii. 6 (R.V.).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xxv. 1-13.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. v. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Rev. xix. 7, 9.

<sup>6</sup> Martin F. Tupper, *Proverbial Philosophy; Of Love*.

being, or can, in the same sense, or to the same degree, be called an enslavement, an idolatry. In respect, therefore, of intensity, sexual love approximates more closely than any other to its divine antitype.

Again, this species of love exhibits more strongly than any other the divine characteristic of super-rationality, in its boundless capacity for unreasoning forgiveness. And is not this exactly the most prominent trait of the love of God? 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; and though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'<sup>1</sup> A love that can forgive after this sort displays every element of super-rationality. And as if to mark with a special emphasis the fact that this wholly super-rational—almost irrational—faculty of forgiveness is no empty hyperbole but a solid reality, the prophet, by a fine oxymoron, introduces this unreasoning love by an appeal to reason:—'Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.'<sup>2</sup> It is as if God were saying to mankind, See what sort of reasoning it is that you may expect from this love of Mine. Not the stern and exacting reasoning of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Not the reason that weighs and calculates. But a reason that stops not to inquire, and that stays not to consider; that can wipe out transgressions as though they had never been; that can more than forgive,—that can forget; till crimson stains and scarlet blots become as sun-bleached wool and as driven snow. For My love is a lover's love—without reason, beyond reason, above reason. From a love-logic such as this you have nothing to fear. Come, then, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.

And, in the next place, it is to sexual love that the

<sup>1</sup> Is. i. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

high honour belongs of being the parent of every other species of human affection. In the eyes of the evolutionist the sexual instinct is the primordial germ of all affection. Among the lowest forms of life, as is well known, reproduction is effected by the purely asexual process of fission, the parent breaking up into parts, each of which becomes a new individual. Obviously, under conditions such as these there is no room for anything partaking of the nature of affection. Until the sexual instinct appeared the world was a loveless world.

But the sexual instinct is to love very much what molecular attraction is to gravitation. It is the parent of every altruistic emotion. The first dawn of the sexual instinct marked the entrance into the world of that tractive force which 'draws with the bands of love.'<sup>1</sup> And that instinct, under the ubiquitous law of evolution, has developed into sexual love, as its direct descendant; and thence, collaterally, into all other kinds of love,—love of children, of parents, of friends, and, to the extent to which Christianity has succeeded in effecting the superhuman transformation, even the love of enemies.

It is not until we recognise these facts that we perceive what an enormous debt Religion owes to sexual love, or realise how exalted is the rank which sexual love is entitled to claim in the pantheon of human emotions.

'God is love.' We say and re-say these words until we have lost almost all sense of their proportion and their meaning. We have grown so accustomed to the sound of the formula that it has ceased to impress upon us one-thousandth part of what it contains. And

<sup>1</sup> Hos. xi. 4.



in spite of the protest which the words import, we still secretly, in our heart of hearts, regard God as a kind of all-powerful Autocrat, Who governs the world and the universe, no doubt not without a certain regard for the welfare of His creatures, yet still with a purpose which is primarily directed to His own gratification, and on principles which are mainly self-centred, if not actually selfish.

But what a travesty of the formula does such a conception involve! What an immeasurable distance are we straying from its meaning when we suffer ourselves to think thus of God! Think for a moment what the words import. Consider what love really is. Love, the spendthrift; love, the prodigal; love, that gives all, asking nothing in return—and yet, by some mysterious law of its being, sows the seeds of gain in loss itself, reaping harvests of wealth from its own lavish waste, and garnering stores of profit out of its very profusion. Of its boundless extravagance love takes no reckoning. With a perverse economy love ‘seeketh not its own.’ Love keeps no profit-and-loss account. Love strikes no balance between ‘mine’ and ‘thine.’ For to love, all things are loss. And to love, all loss is gain.

But if this be so, then it is obvious that we must totally reconstruct the very basis of our conception of God. We must look upon Him now as the Supreme Altruist, Who has never known a selfish thought, and Whose whole existence is one vast expenditure—an outpouring of Himself, in passionate self-sacrifice, for the welfare and the happiness of His children. More than a father’s affection, more than a mother’s self-forgetting devotion, more than a lover’s love—more a thousandfold than all these is the love of God, ‘which

passeth knowledge,' and which sets no bounds to its bounty save only those which our limitations supply. It was no empty figure of speech which declared 'all things are yours.'<sup>1</sup> For the only limit to God's beneficence is the imperfection of our petitions:—'We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss.'<sup>2</sup>

If God is love, then the way to realise what God is to us is to ascribe to Him what He Himself has taught us of the attributes of love. If we would re-teach ourselves the forgotten lesson of the full import of the formula 'God is love,' we need but take a few of the traits of love and transfer them to our conception of Him. Take these three:—'thinketh no evil'; 'believeth all things'; 'hopeth all things.' What does this mean to each of us? It means that God thinks no evil of us; believes all things of us; hopes all things from us. After years of disappointment and disillusionment, sufficient, one might have supposed, to undeceive even the blindest adoration of love itself, God still believes in us implicitly; still hopes—almost, it may be, against hope; still thinks no evil of us. Others may doubt us; God never will. We may abandon hope; but He will still hope on. We may be overwhelmed with the consciousness of our failures and shortcomings; but He sees in us nothing but good. What a contrast!—our mistrustfulness of Him, and His boundless confidence in us! And what a revelation of ourselves is reflected in such a love as this! What a truth to keep before our eyes as the lodestar of existence! For God's view of things must needs be the true view. If He thinks no evil of us, it is because we possess the potentiality of rising above all evil. If He believes all things of us, it is because we are not unworthy of His confidence.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 21.

<sup>2</sup> James iv. 3.

If He hopes all things from us, then we too may hope with the confidence of complete assurance.

If to this it be objected that it is incredible that God can think thus of us, if, as we believe, He knows us better even than we know ourselves, the answer is, that we do not know ourselves. We know only the phenomenal side of our nature. The reality that is within us we have yet to learn. And it is just because this hidden reality, unknown to us, is known to God, that He is able to believe in us, to hope for us, and to think no evil of us. We know our incapacities; but He knows our potentialities. We know our weakness; He knows our strength. And the first and last lesson, which it is Religion's to teach, and ours in all humility to learn, is, that the one and only force that possesses the power to eradicate the weaknesses and imperfections which characterise the phenomenal side of our nature, and establish in their place the God-like attributes that belong to the Real, thereby making us one with God, is the eternal, unfailing, passion of love.

It is not until we appreciate these facts and recognise how impossible it is to learn to love God except by learning to love one another, that we realise what a priceless treasure is human affection—how incomparably surpassing all other possessions—how far the greatest thing in the world. Lover, husband, wife, parent, child, brother, sister,—what are these relationships but so many schools in which to learn the one great passion of love? And just as the mundane faith of the Judaic Code is incomplete in itself, finding its completion in the other-world faith of Christianity, so this love of father, or mother, or sister, or brother, or husband, or wife, is incomplete in itself. It too finds its completion in that other-world love, the love of

Christ which passeth knowledge, and which bears upon it this stamp of immortality, this hall-mark of eternity — ‘love never faileth.’<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we reach the solution of the ultimate problem presented to us by a comprehensive examination of the anatomy of Truth. From the point of view of Philosophy, Truth, in its widest classification, embraces time and eternity. And these two correspond to the phenomenal and the real. The phenomenal is temporal; the real is eternal. Eternity means, not everlasting time, but absence of time. For time is progression; eternity is state. To the question, therefore, Is there really such a thing as eternity? Philosophy answers that there must be. Eternity is a reality—in fact, eternity is an attribute of the real. And to the further inquiry, Is it possible to pass from time to eternity? Philosophy once more replies in the affirmative. As motion may pass into status, so progression may pass into state. As a moving body may become stationary, so a temporal being may become eternal. And finally, to the yet further question, How is this transition from the temporal to the eternal to be effected? Philosophy answers in two words—by love.

And the message of Religion is the same. What shall I do to inherit eternal life? Love God and love thy neighbour—learn to love God by cultivating love for thy neighbour. This do, and thou shalt live. This is the way—the only way—to eternal life. For life eternal is to know God; and God is love. Every one, therefore, that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

## CHAPTER XV

### CONCLUSION

IN the opening chapter of this work we examined very briefly the scientific aspect of the problem of the efficacy of prayer; and we saw what a radical change has passed over the attitude of Science towards this momentous question. Twenty years ago, Science was preaching, with characteristic self-confidence, the desolating doctrine, not of 'not proven,' but of 'not possible.' According to that view, prayer was a vain and futile effort of the imagination, a childish self-deception, a myth, a romance. The heathen, prostrate before a stock or a stone, was not more deluded than the Christian suppliant petitioning with tears of agony a God Who could not hear, or would not answer. According to that interpretation, the irrepressible cry for divine assistance rings out, with a note of ineffable tragedy, into the empty void of a deaf-and-dumb Infinity, there to wander for ever and ever in the vicious circle of an unsatisfied longing.

But now, as we have seen, all this is changed. With the recognition of the distinction between energy and directivity, prayer acquires in the scientific sphere at least the possibility of a status. Every taint of irrationality is swept away. To pray for rain, for help, for guidance, for protection,—for everything that we need, whether subjectively or objectively,—becomes,



from the scientific point of view, the most rational thing in the world the moment we recognise that the blind forces of nature are guided and applied by a directive Intelligence. This invaluable contribution to scientific knowledge, largely, if not wholly, overlooked by nineteenth-century scientists, has been tardily supplied in this twentieth century. Then prayer was the monopoly of Religion: now it is—or, at all events, may be—the common property of Religion and Science.

It is impossible to overestimate the value which attaches to this noteworthy 'change of mind' on the part of Science. It obliterates at one stroke the ban which a false philosophy had pronounced against the whole creed of Religion. For the question of the efficacy of prayer lies at the very root of all Religion, Pagan, Judaic, and Christian alike. So long as that problem remains under a prohibitory edict, all the forces of Religion, from the philosophic point of view, are paralysed. Answer that question in the affirmative, and Religion's central doctrine, with all its corollaries and deductions, as disclosed in the Judaic and Christian Codes, falls naturally and irresistibly into the category of scientific realities as a phenomenon which Science is bound to take into serious account. This profound achievement has now been successfully, if tardily, accomplished by the modern disclosure of the doctrine of the 'directivity of life.' And thus Sir Oliver Lodge's homely illustration of the gardener with his watering-pot comes to us almost less as an illustration than as a revelation.

Such being the position to which Science, apart altogether from theological considerations, has now carried the fundamental problem of Religion's doctrine of the efficacy of prayer—a position which discloses a basis of

possibility, supporting, as a superstructure, a strong probability—it is necessary, if we would arrive at the most reliable solution of the problem of Religion that human knowledge permits, to apply to that problem whatever solvents the science of theology can supply. Obviously, Religion's central doctrine of Faith hinges entirely upon the still more fundamental doctrine of the efficacy of prayer. If prayer is never answered there is no room for faith. There may be a negative and passive submission to the inevitable; but it is difficult to see how there can be any positive and practical reliance upon a Power of which all that can be said is that it is deaf and dumb. We must, therefore, examine the anatomy of Truth in order to ascertain whether the structure of the phenomena which fall within the province of the science of Theology will disclose any evidence in support of the doctrine of a Faith which rests upon the belief that prayer is answered.

Obviously, the first and primary question to be determined in this inquiry is whether there be indeed a Supreme God able and willing to answer prayer to such a degree and in such manner that He is deserving of all confidence. And upon this point, as we saw in the chapters on *Christianity* and on *The Phenomenal and the Real*, the possibility of any really philosophic scepticism is swept away. If there be one truth of the utmost philosophic certainty, it is the existence of that Eternal and Infinite Being Whom Religion calls God. If there be one text upon which Philosophy can preach to us with all the assurance of complete conviction, it is that God is the only object really deserving of confidence,—the only Power in the Universe Which is 'without limit in time or space,' and Which is, there-

fore, wholly superior to the conditions of time and change, and, consequently, the only Power in Which we can repose a trust that cannot fail.

Having thus established, on a basis which neither Science nor Philosophy can dispute, the fact of the existence of a Being Whose attributes, as deciphered by Philosophy, are such as sufficiently identify Him with the supreme Being Whom Religion calls God, the next question that requires to be answered is whether this Power has ever spoken to mankind. The answers which Philosophy and Religion respectively return to this interrogatory are unanimous, though different. Both answer, Yes ; but in different ways. All nature, says Philosophy, and all phenomena, are expressions and manifestations of this all-subtending Power. They, therefore, together with the natural laws which they disclose, and which they obey, are so many messages from the Supreme Intelligence to mankind.

Religion, too, answers, Yes. But the message to which Religion appeals and on which Religion relies has taken a different form from that which Philosophy recognises. Religion's answer to the question is this:— 'God Who at sundry times and in divers manners (or 'in divers parts and in divers manners'—*πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*) spake in time past unto the fathers in the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us in His Son.'<sup>1</sup> Thus Philosophy and Religion respectively recognise two messages. Philosophy reads a supernatural message in the book of nature; Religion, in the book of revelation. And the close and natural affinity of these two answers to one another is incidentally disclosed by the significant circumstance that, after declaring that God 'hath spoken unto us in

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 1, 2.

His Son,' Religion immediately adds, with an artlessness which defies all suggestion of collusion, 'through Whom also He made the worlds.'<sup>1</sup> To which is to be added the fact that Religion still further emphasises the affinity of the natural message to the revealed message by commencing the code of Religion with a detailed account of the 'genesis of the heaven and the earth.'

Now, it is obvious that the two messages, thus recognised by Philosophy and Religion respectively, lie in two different planes of existence. The book of nature belongs to the physical and physiological plane; the book of revelation, to the psychical. If, then, Philosophy and Religion are both right (as they very well may be) in the views which they thus respectively entertain—if, in fact, Nature and Revelation are both utterances of Supernature, speaking to us in different planes (πολυμερῶς) and in different manners (πολυτρόπως), and if Religion is right in her spontaneous testimony to the intimacy of relationship which exists between these two messages,—it is highly probable that the two messages, when analytically examined, will be found to exhibit a community of structure and function indicative of the fact that each of them possesses a real and permanent status in the anatomy of Truth. And, conversely, if such a community can be detected, its discovery will furnish an important link in the proof that Philosophy and Religion *are* both in the right.

The search for this structural and functional community proves itself more than successful. For an examination of the principal features that are to be found in the internal structures of Religion, on the one

<sup>1</sup> Heb. i. 2,

hand, and of the physical and physiological cosmos, on the other, reveals the mysterious and highly significant fact that the arrangements, as regards both organ and function, which are discernible in the one structure, are reproduced in the other. The physical universe known to Science exhibits, as we know, the two grand divisions of things, termed respectively the Inorganic and the Organic. The psychical universe known to Religion furnishes a corresponding classification in Paganism, on the one hand, and Revealed Religion, on the other.

Again, as the organic is divided into Plant and Animal, so Revealed Religion is divided into Judaism and Christianity. So that in the case of both planes of existence, the physical and the psychical, we see this identity of structure—in either case a twofold division; resolvable, by subdivision of the higher of the two divisions, into a threefold division. In either case, too, we find an exact correspondence between these two subdivisions; for what the plant is to the animal, that is Judaism to Christianity. In either case, moreover, we see two acts of divine supernatural interference taking exactly homologous parts in the production of the three orders of existence—in the case of the physical plane, two acts of divine creation; in the case of the psychical plane, two acts of divine revelation. And these acts of supernatural intervention are identical; resulting, when operating in the physical plane, in creation, and when operating in the psychical plane, in revelation.

And thus we see that, in point both of structure and of mode of origination, the anatomy of each of the two great orders of Truth, the physical and the psychical, which the universe discloses to our con-



templation, is identical. Both orders are built on the same lines, conform to the same plan, are composed of the same parts, and are products of the same mode of origin.

Turning from organ to function, we find the same identity of arrangement in the anatomy of either order. In every functional department, from the most general to the most particular, the homology reveals its presence, extending even to the most minute details. The functions which are performed by the Inorganic to the Organic are repeated by Paganism in relation to Revealed Religion. For Paganism is to Revelation what 'the dust of the ground' is to man physical,—'out of it was it taken.'

Again, the functional relations of Plant to Animal are reproduced, with extraordinary minuteness and exactitude, in the relations of Judaism to Christianity. In either case the same historic order of origin; the same superiority of the later over the earlier; the same 'more abundant life' possessed by the later; the same preference of the lowly and the humble as the first recipients of the higher life; the same increase in motility; the same strange reversal of the functional use made by either order of its own environing atmosphere; the same intolerance by the higher order of that portion of the atmosphere which is vitally necessary to the lower. All these conformities attest, by their extraordinary exactness, the perfect functional parallelism which exists between the anatomy of the physical cosmos, on the one hand, and that of the psychical cosmos, on the other.

It follows from what has been said that, if the homologies which we have been tracing between plant

and animal life, on the one hand, and Judaism and Christianity, on the other, are true, Christianity must be vitally dependent upon Judaism, not only for its origination, but also for its continuance and its maintenance. In the physiological plane the vegetable kingdom, as we know, furnishes the pabulum on which the whole of the animal kingdom is sustained. In the language of Science, 'all animals feed, mediately or immediately, upon plants.' In the language of Religion, 'Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; *to you it shall be for meat*. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, *I have given every green herb for meat*.'<sup>1</sup>

Now, as regards alimentation, the animal kingdom differs radically from the vegetable kingdom in one important respect. All true plants—that is to say, all green chlorophyll-possessing plants—have the power of constructing protoplasm out of the inorganic elements on which they feed. Through their roots, and through the surfaces of their leaves, they absorb as their food inorganic salts, also carbon dioxide, water, and ammonia; and of these inorganic materials they manufacture, by means of the energy supplied by light and heat, the living protoplasm of which their organic substance is formed. Animals, on the other hand, are unable to construct their protoplasm directly out of these inorganic materials. Before an animal can assimilate them, it is necessary that they should have been first elaborated by plants into organic vegetable tissue. Animals, in fact, so far as food is concerned, begin where plants end. They take, as the

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 29, 30.

basis of their food-stuff, organic vegetable matter. This is what is meant by saying that all animals feed, mediately or immediately, on plants. And thus the vegetable kingdom lifts inorganic materials into living vegetable matter; and thereupon the members of the animal kingdom proceed to raise the organic vegetable matter, thus manufactured by plants, into the still higher category of animal tissue.

Now, if the functional relations between Judaism and Christianity are really comparable to the corresponding relations between plant and animal, it is to be expected that the distinction which thus exists between plant and animal, in respect of alimentation, will be found to exist also between these two great orders of Revealed Religion. Let us see whether this expectation is realised.

We have already seen that of the three orders of Religion, Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity,—which are the respective psychic homologues of the three orders of physical things, the inorganic, the plant, and the animal,—Judaism makes precisely the same use of Paganism as that which the plant makes of inorganic substances. For we have observed<sup>1</sup> that, in the opening chapters of Genesis, Judaism seized upon the two great pagan concepts, namely, the idea of the existence of spiritual beings, and the conception of their accessibility by means of prayer; and quickened, by the touch of supernatural revelation, these two unorganised pagan truths, thereby raising them into the organised truths of which the Judaic Code is built up. It is obvious that these pagan concepts constitute the aliment upon which the Judaic Religion is sustained from day to day. They are the food-stuff which

<sup>1</sup> Chapter viii.

keeps Judaism alive. Disprove them, sweep them out of existence, and Judaism would immediately cease to live. And from this it is clear that the Judaic Religion possesses the power of deriving its nourishment directly from the unorganised truths of Paganism, just as the plant feeds upon inorganic substances.

But with Christianity the case is different. The imperfect germ of faith, which pagan religious ideas supplied, is too vague and indefinite a concept to serve as food for so advanced and complex an organisation as the Christian Code. Christianity is too delicate an organism to be capable of assimilating these crude and unconcocted notions. Accordingly (as in the plant world) the function of Judaism is to manufacture this inorganic germ of an imperfect faith into an organised and living trust in God. And this concept, thus organised by Judaism, is handed on by Judaism to serve as the nutriment for the still higher and more refined faith of Christianity. In the physical and the psychical planes, therefore, the same arrangement of alimentary functions is discernible. The inorganic feeds the plant; the plant feeds the animal. And in the same way, the truths of Paganism sustain the 'faith' of Judaism; and the Judaic 'faith' nourishes and keeps alive the still higher 'faith' of Christianity. This is why Christ so emphatically declared that He had come, 'not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfil.' And this is exactly what He meant by 'fulfilling' them. Judaism, like the plant kingdom, contains much that in itself is both beautiful and true. But, like the plant kingdom, it attains its highest purpose—it reaches its 'fulfilment'—only when it performs its allotted function of serving, not as an end, but as a

means to a higher end, by supplying a living nutriment for the 'more abundant life' of Christianity.

Are we asked why Christianity is unable to manufacture for itself, without the intervention of Judaism, the pagan germ of an imperfect faith into the perfected and spiritualised faith of Christ? To such a question we reply by another question—Why cannot the animal manufacture inorganic substances into animal tissue, without the intervention of vegetable life? Let Science answer the second question, and we will then reply to the first; for the one answer is contained in the other.

Nevertheless, the answer can, perhaps, be more easily given in relation to Religion than in relation to plant and animal. The reason, which is not wholly beyond the reach of surmise, lies deep in the innermost nature of things. It is part of the constitution of the universe. Whatever may be the answer as regards plant and animal, it is certain that, as regards Judaism and Christianity at all events, we can give with certainty, if not a complete, at least a partial, answer to the inquiry. We *can* see the sort of reason that underlies this mysterious arrangement of things. Indeed, Religion has partly, if not fully, explained it. 'He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen?'<sup>1</sup> He cannot. Such love is philosophic, as well as a religious, impossibility. For it would involve a violation of the great psychic law, to which we have already alluded more than once, that all our knowledge of the unseen is derived from, and based upon, our knowledge of the seen. It is, as we have seen, a law of thought that we must learn to know the material before we can learn

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iv. 20.



to know the immaterial. There is no knowledge, and no appreciation, of the invisible until the visible has first been known and appreciated. So is it with knowledge; and so is it also with affection. The love of the visible must precede the love of the invisible. If a man has not learnt to love his brother, it is a sheer impossibility for him to learn to love God. And in obedience to the same principle, and by virtue of the same law, until we have learnt to trust in God for the things of the life which we can see, we cannot learn to trust in Him for the things of the life which we cannot see.

The manufacture, out of the raw materials furnished by Paganism, of this trust in God in respect of visible things is, therefore, the perennial function which Judaism is perpetually performing. And the cultivation of this Judaic 'trust' is the lifelong lesson which Judaism is ever pressing upon mankind. To Judaism the learning of this lesson is a final end. It is the goal at which the Judaic Religion aims. To Christianity it is a means to the further end of learning to acquire the still higher faith in respect of the unseen 'life which is hid with Christ in God.'<sup>1</sup> And this explains, not only why it is that Judaism is a necessary introduction to Christianity, but also why Christianity, from century to century, and even from day to day, cannot afford to dispense with Judaism. Can Christianity live without Judaism? No; for in each man's daily life Judaism is for ever performing its allotted function of manufacturing those practical experiences of the present-worth of trust in God which feed and support the more intangible faith of Christianity.

Thus the dependence of Christianity upon Judaism

<sup>1</sup> Col. iii. 3.

rests upon one of the fundamental laws of Nature. It is a necessary, because it is a natural, dependence. For experience of the visible must precede the knowledge of the invisible. Forget that a stone, or a tree, or a mountain, has two sides, and yet try to realise that there are two sides to a question. Forget to love one another, and yet expect to love God. These, indeed, are vain attempts. But they are not more futile, or more hopeless, than the effort to sever Christianity from the Judaic Code, upon which Christianity is vitally dependent both for its initiation and for its continued maintenance.

It will be seen from the above that Judaism moves in an altogether lower plane than that of Christianity. Judaism is emphatically the Religion of this world; Christianity, the Religion of the world to come. In support of this proposition we have both the homology of plant and animal, and also the express warrant of Christ Himself. The plane of plant life is a lower plane than that of animal life. A being standing on the plant plane would have to look up to the animal plane. And, conversely, from the animal plane we look down upon the plant plane of existence. With this fact compare the words of Christ addressed to the Jews, who persisted in taking their stand on the Judaic Code, refusing to rise to the loftier plane of Christianity:—‘Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.’<sup>1</sup> In this rebuke note particularly the juxtaposition of ‘from beneath—from above,’ on the one hand, and ‘of this world—not of this world,’ on the other. Judaism moves in the lower plane. It is ‘from beneath.’ Christianity, in the higher plane—‘from

<sup>1</sup> John viii. 23.

above.' And this difference between the two planes is precisely the difference between worldliness and other-worldliness. For Judaism is 'of this world'; Christianity is 'not of this world.'

The lifelong lesson which Religion is thus for ever pressing upon mankind finds its expression, as we have seen, in the Great Dilemma, by which Religion offers to mankind the choice between one or other of two rival modes of life,—a life governed and directed by self-effacing God-reliance, or a career abandoned to God-effacing self-reliance. To the manufacture and the application of this dilemma each of the three orders of Religion has contributed its own peculiar quota. Paganism has furnished the lemma upon which the dilemma is built. Judaism applies the dilemma to the concerns of this life; Christianity, to the concerns of the life to come.

In discussing this Great Dilemma we saw that the essential distinction between self-reliance and God-reliance is to be found in the effect which either of these two principles of conduct produces on the constitution of the man who adopts it. Assuming that the self-reliant man and the God-reliant both achieve in the course of a lifetime equal *extrinsic* successes, nevertheless at the end of their lives they are *intrinsically* antipodes to one another—for they stand at the very opposite poles of existence. This distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic constitutes the very pith and kernel of Religion's problem of life. For Religion looks exclusively at motive, and not at all at achievement. To the self-reliant man the extrinsic result of his efforts is everything. If he fails in that, he fails altogether. Then the whole object of his existence is defeated; and the

shipwreck of his endeavours is to him a 'total loss.' To the God-reliant man, on the other hand, extrinsic results are of secondary importance. The real and essential point is their intrinsic effect upon himself. If the result of his life's action has been to familiarise him with the habitual practice of prayer, until trust in God has become ingrained into his innermost being, dominating all his thoughts and actions, and subordinating his own will exclusively to the will of God, then it matters not that he may have made little or no progress in other directions, for he will have advanced far along the path of spiritual evolution. And so long as he retains his foothold in that path, everything else is comparatively of little account. For even if he has lost the whole world, he will have gained his own soul.

It must be borne in mind that this is no problematical or random statement of the case. It is based upon a substantial reason, which is neither difficult of observation nor open to dispute. The objective of Religion is the acquisition of eternal life—a life which lies beyond the grave. The attainment of this goal is to the self-reliant man naturally and obviously an impossibility. It lies beyond his reach for the simple reason that he is aiming short of it. In relation to eternity he is adopting the Zenonian method of life; and, therefore, by virtue of the simplest principles of natural law it is impossible for him to reach the overtaking-point.

To the God-reliant man, on the other hand, the position is precisely reversed. Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, he escapes, by virtue of the calm persistence of his acquired God-reliance, the convulsive spasm of Zenonian effort, as he presses on with a

constantly increasing momentum toward the goal which lies beyond the grave. And this 'momentous' achievement, it is almost superfluous to repeat, is itself neither doubtful nor uncertain. For a *comprehensive* analysis of the anatomy of Truth shows, as we have seen, that the programme of life which Religion prescribes furnishes every factor which Philosophy could require for the solution of the problem.

It will be recollected that, in the chapter on *Time and Eternity*, it was shown that Philosophy and Religion are unanimous in declaring that the problem of acquiring eternal life is not insoluble, and that its solution is summed up in the single word 'Love.' But it will be found, on looking more closely into the matter, that Religion further offers what, at first sight, looks like a second and a different solution of the problem. To the question, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?' Christianity replies, it is true, 'Love God and love thy neighbour. This do and thou shalt live.'<sup>1</sup> But to the almost identical question, 'What must I do to be saved?' Christianity gives a different answer—'Trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'<sup>2</sup>

What is the meaning of this dual solution? Are 'salvation' and 'eternal life' two objectives, or only two aspects of one objective? And are 'trust' and 'love' two methods, or merely two different ways of describing one method? We habitually think of the two terms, salvation and eternal life, as synonymous, as if they were but two names for one thing. But though they are intimately connected, they are by no means identical. Indeed, taken together, they furnish an admirable illustration of the comprehen-

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 25-28.

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvi. 30, 31.



sive method of knowledge. In order to understand them let us consider for a moment the parallel case of the two terms 'endless' and 'everlasting.' We have but to glance at these two words to see that they are complementary terms, signifying, the one the negative, and the other the positive, aspect of perpetuity. 'Endless' is the negative term, expressing absence of termination. 'Everlasting' gives the positive side, signifying presence of continuity. And this is exactly the distinction between salvation and eternal life. Salvation expresses the negative aspect of spiritual evolution. It means rescue from destruction, the elimination of mortality, the absence of death. In the words of the Psalmist, 'Our God is the God of Whom cometh *salvation*: God is the Lord, by Whom we *escape death*.'<sup>1</sup> Eternal life, on the other hand, presents the positive side of the problem. It means the possession of vitality, the presence of life. The two terms are, in fact, reciprocals, either of which expresses the negative, or the positive, complement of the other.

The same distinction is observable between the two processes of trust and love, by which the negative prize of salvation and the positive reward of eternal life are respectively to be obtained. Trust in God is a passive attitude. It is a condition of receptivity, —a leaning upon an extrinsic force for guidance and support, in preference to an active self-guidance and self-assertion. How truly God-reliance is an attitude of passivity is attested by the hostile criticism by which the doctrine of trust in God has not infrequently been assailed,—that it inculcates a policy of inactivity and indolence. This criticism, it is true, cannot be sustained. The life which Religion enjoins

<sup>1</sup> Psalm lxviii. 20.

is the most active life in the world. 'Not slothful in diligence: fervent in spirit,' is Religion's express injunction.<sup>1</sup> But in form, though not in substance, the criticism is true. For the doctrine does present the negative aspect of activity. The trust in God which is the source of all Christian energy is a condition of passivity. It is the elimination of all anxiety. 'Be not anxious (μὴ μεριμνᾶτε) for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink.'<sup>2</sup> And in eliminating anxiety it eliminates also all the feverish energy which anxiety begets. It is an enjoinder to quiescence, an injunction to 'be still.' 'Be still, and know that I am God.'<sup>3</sup> The trust, which secures 'the peace of God,' induces the 'rest' of tranquillity. 'Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'<sup>4</sup> To the storms of life, as well as to the stormy waters, Christ's message of rebuke is, 'Peace, be still.'<sup>5</sup>

Nor is it less easy to see that love, the harbinger of eternal life, is itself an active vital energy. Love that 'perseveres (μακροθυμεῖ) and behaves in a kindly manner (χρηστεύεται)'; that 'rejoiceth with the truth'; that 'endureth (στέγει) all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, ventures (ὑπομένει) all things';<sup>6</sup>—we have but to glance at these characteristics to see that love is essentially a positive dynamical force, as keen and vital as the eternal life which is itself but a product of what the venerable Isaac Taylor calls the 'perfectionment' of love.

And thus Religion's dual prescription for the perfecting of spiritual evolution is a *comprehensive* presentment of the twofold aspects of the problem;—the nega-

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 11 (R.V.).

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xlv. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xi. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Mark iv. 39.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 4-7.

tive elimination of destruction, secured by the passive process of God-reliance; and the positive fruition of life, evolved from the active energy of love. The ideal Christian is a compound being, the product of two reciprocal functions,—a trust that resolves itself into mental tranquillity, and a love that is ablaze with emotional energy. Religion's scheme of life is an amalgam of two complementary principles—a negative and a positive; a static and a dynamic; a rest and a restlessness; a repose and an activity; an intellectual calm in the midst of an intense emotion; a mind at peace and a heart on fire.

It should, however, be borne in mind, that this distinction between a negative 'salvation' acquired by the passivity of trust and a positive 'life' developed out of the activity of love, though a true distinction, is one which is not always expressly observed by Religion. Thus, although Peter speaks of '*faith unto salvation*,'<sup>1</sup> and 'the end of your *faith*, even the *salvation* of your souls,'<sup>2</sup> we have also, as we saw in the eleventh chapter, the injunction, 'fight the good fight of *faith*; lay hold on *eternal life*.' The truth is that salvation merges into eternal life, just as trust, as was pointed out in the chapter on *The Great Dilemma*, leads directly and inevitably to love. The two processes of trust and love, and their respective products, salvation and eternal life, are so intimately connected and blended together, that for the practical purposes of Religion it is impossible—as it is unnecessary—to keep them distinct or distinguished from one another. Yet there is a distinction. In the process of acquiring God-likeness, faith is the initial stage; love, the final fulfilment. Faith is the antecedent; love, the conse-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. i. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 9.

quent. Faith is the promise; love, the fruition. 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts *by faith*; that ye may be rooted and grounded *in love*.'<sup>1</sup>

What, then, is the status, structural and functional, of Religion in the anatomy of Truth? In answer to this question it is obvious from what has been said that Religion exhibits relations not only to Science but also to Philosophy. It is possible to compare Religion with Science; and it is possible also to compare Religion with Philosophy. But this is only another way of saying that Religion owns and occupies a place in each of two departments of Truth,—in the department devoted to Science, and in that assigned to Philosophy. In the scientific department the three great orders of Religion—Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity—correspond respectively to the three great orders of Science,—the inorganic, the plant, and the animal. In the department allotted to Philosophy, a similar correspondence of arrangement is observable. Philosophy divides all things into the phenomenal and the real. Religion does the same. For Judaism is the Religion of the phenomenal; Christianity is the Religion of the real. Again, Philosophy classifies things into the two great categories of the temporal and the eternal. And here, once more, Religion discloses a corresponding classification. For Judaism is the Religion of the temporal; Christianity, the Religion of the eternal.

And what are the practical results, as affecting our daily lives, of the conclusions thus deduced from our examination of the anatomy of Truth? The programme of Christianity is to unify life by focusing all our knowledge upon one supreme fact, and concen-

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iii. 17.

trating all our energies upon the attainment of one distant end. This supreme knowledge and this distant object are, as we have seen, to be attained by exercising the faculties of trust and love; and the first and last lesson which Religion has to teach is, therefore, the method of acquiring these two all-dominating faculties.

Here, then, to sum up, we reach the final quest which the programme of Religion sets before us as the purpose of existence. Trust in God and trust in Christ; love to God, and love to man; the acquisition of these two faculties of trust and love, as the means of ensuring salvation and acquiring eternal life, Religion regards as the all-in-all. To study life from this dual standpoint; to watch every event, as it comes along, and read in it the handwriting of divine directivity; to steep the soul in an atmosphere of prayer until, in the emphatic, but not exaggerated, language of Religion, we have learnt to 'pray without ceasing'; to habitually attune the ear to catch the first faint whispers of God's answers to our petitions; under all conditions and in all emergencies to exercise the faculties of trust in God and love to God and man, till trust becomes an instinct and love a second nature; this, according to Religion's view of things, is to accomplish the purpose of existence by fulfilling the conditions of a 'godly'—that is to say, a God-reliant—life. And in this verdict, as we have seen, Philosophy and Science acquiesce. These pursuits, therefore, must be taken to constitute the true objective of all endeavour. Life has no other purpose; effort and energy, no other goal. These gained, all is gained. These missed, all is lost. To Religion and Philosophy alike the Universe is one vast University in which to graduate in the Schools of Trust and Love.



Possibly it will be objected that these are no new conclusions; that there is nothing novel in this doctrine of trust and love. It is at least as old as the New Testament, and to a great extent co-eval with the Old. What, then, have we gained by traversing the circuitous route of the foregoing argument, in order to arrive at last at the only conclusion which Religion either sanctions or permits?

We answer, Of course the conclusion is not new. There *is* no new conclusion in Religion. The whole code of Religion, and the only conclusion of Religion, were fixed and stereotyped for all time two thousand years ago, and no man may alter them. If we may express ourselves in the terminology of the logicians, Religion contains three predicaments, and three only. 'And now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three.'<sup>1</sup> These three predicaments—Faith, Hope, and Love—are the beginning, the middle, and the end of Religion; and Religion contains nothing else,—or, rather, whatever else Religion contains is comprised in one or other of these three. For Religion is born in trust; lives in hope; and dies in love.

Is born in trust,—because to every man the first dawn of trust in God is the birthday of Religion. Lives in hope,—the sure and certain hope of eternal life, of which trust and love are the promise and the fulfilment. Dies in love,—because the attainment of that highest form of love, the love of enemies, will make us 'perfect, even as our heavenly Father is perfect,' and 'when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.'<sup>3</sup> In this sense the aim of Religion—like the jurist's 'aim of government'—is strictly suicidal. When faith has vanished into

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 48.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 10.

sight, when hope has been emptied in delight, then the whole anatomy of Religion and of Truth will dissolve and disappear in the ocean of eternal love.

But though it is thus useless to seek and impossible to find any new conclusion in Religion, it must not be supposed that the value of the foregoing argument is in any way diminished by this circumstance. The truth is that an immense value attaches to the discovery of any new route by which to approach Religion's one and only conclusion. As we have seen, to know is to comprehend; and knowledge becomes more and more comprehensive and complete, accordingly as we regard the object of our investigation from more and more numerous points of view. As often, therefore, as we succeed in finding a fresh avenue of approach to Religion's inevitable conclusion, so often are we simultaneously discovering fresh standpoints from which to examine that conclusion; and in that proportion do we learn to know it more comprehensively, and therefore more truly, than ever we knew it before.

He who sets out in search of a new truth in Religion is like a man looking for the philosopher's stone; and he who thinks that he has discovered such a truth will do well to suspect that he has missed his bearings and lost his way. But he who, pursuing a new and untrodden path, finds that it leads at last to the heart of an old truth, may claim to have achieved a feat of genuine exploration,—to have added something to our knowledge of the geography of the Universe.

A due appreciation of these things transforms the whole aspect of existence. This present life becomes then ennobled into a means to a higher end. Every success contains then the foretaste of a more precious guerdon to follow; and sorrow acquires a new signifi-

cance. The 'far-off mystery of tears' begins to lose its mysteriousness, and to assume a phase of intelligibility. For the recognition of the true purpose of life, as prescribed by Religion, invests existence with a novel and a cryptic meaning. It sets a new price on pain, and exalts into an unsuspected sublimity the two great categories of human activity—the proud privilege, to do; and the sad prerogative, to suffer.

And from this it follows that the seemingly most humble and uneventful career is transformed by Religion into a history of portentous interest. 'Peace,' sang the poet, 'hath her victories no less renowned than war.'<sup>1</sup> Peace! What is peace? 'I see,' exclaimed Paul, 'another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.'<sup>2</sup> Paul's verdict is true for all men and for all time. All of us, as we know only too well, are busily engaged, all our lives long, in proclaiming to the world around us, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. Behind the calmest exterior, and beneath the most serene demeanour, each of us is conscious that there is raging within him an internal strife, on which hangs the real issue of his career. The keenest of battles, fought on the most stricken fields, are those which are waged in the human heart, between the powers of God-reliance, on the one hand, and the apostate forces of self-reliance, on the other. 'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our trust.'<sup>3</sup> And it is one of the mysterious characteristics of this internecine conflict that this internal struggle, which constitutes, for every man, the most momentous of all issues, is, to the world around him, unchronicled and unknown.

It is to this strange quality of secrecy that Christ

<sup>1</sup> Milton, *Sonnet* xvi. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. vii. 23.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John v. 4.

referred in His announcement that 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation.'<sup>1</sup> And it is this impossibility of 'observation'—the enforced illegibility of this, the one great issue of life—that at once formulates and justifies the law that no man may despise another. For these secret and unblazoned victories constitute the only real triumphs that existence contains. And the meanest peasant, forgotten in his nameless grave, may be a greater victor than the proudest monarch, sepulchred in martial splendour to the sound of an empire's lamentation.

For it is in this secret struggle, with its undisclosed issue, that the criterion of human greatness lies. This is the real, though invisible, finger that points to the index of success or failure. It introduces an unpublished chapter into the volume of every human career; and adds an unwritten postscript to every human epitaph.

Those who are familiar with Buckland's *Curiosities of Natural History* will recollect that the volume opens with a frontispiece which fancifully, but graphically, depicts one of the most characteristic traits of the law of evolution. The picture delineates an incident which is supposed to take place at an imaginary future epoch in the world's history, when the human race shall have become extinct and their premier place, as the lords of creation, shall be occupied by the resuscitated race of the Ichthyosauri. This extinct race of gigantic and fish-like lizards is supposed to have come to life again, at a date when man is to be found only in a fossil state, in the same condition as that in which Ichthyosauri are discovered at the present time; and

<sup>1</sup> Luke xvii. 20.

in place of a human Professor delivering a discourse upon the fossilised skeleton of an ichthyosaurus, the tables are turned, and a learned ichthyosaurian Professor is represented as in the act of delivering a lecture upon the skull of a fossil man. Around the Professor, distinguished by his gigantic jaws and teeth, is gathered a class of attentive listeners, of the same race as himself, all anxious to learn the history of the strange creature to whom had belonged the curious skull, so diminutive in comparison with their own. Exhibiting the fossilised skull to their wondering gaze, the Professor addresses his audience in these words:—‘You will at once perceive that the skull before us belonged to some member of the lower animals. The teeth are very insignificant; the power of the jaws is trifling; and altogether it seems wonderful how the creature could have procured food.’

Now, although this picture is wholly visionary, and although the probability that the imaginary lecture, or any lecture in the least resembling it, will ever be delivered, may be extremely remote, nevertheless the supposed words of the lecturer convey, in a highly impressive manner, a truth of momentous import. For the truth is that the mythical Professor is, from his own point of view, perfectly correct, both in the facts which he adduces, and in the inference which he draws. In very truth the higher evolution—the evolution of the intellect—has stripped the human body of all its natural armature. If man were left to combat with the lower animals on terms of intellectual equality, his chances of survival would be small indeed. It is only because his vast intellectual endowment more than compensates the loss of his physical superiority that he is able to hold his own in the fierce struggle for existence.



See here, then, the truth which Buckland's frontispiece was designed to illustrate. Nature, though lavish of rewards, is also fertile in punishments. We cannot have things both ways. Evolution gives with one hand, but takes away with the other. Those organisms which have followed the lines of the highest intellectual development, have suffered a corresponding deterioration in physical equipment—have lost something in respect of size, or impenetrability, or agility, or strength, or courage. And, conversely, those animals which have followed the lower lines of physical evolution, whatever they may have gained in tooth, or jaw, or limb, or pinion, have missed the higher mental endowment. On the physical plane and on the spiritual alike, development in both directions is impossible. We cannot serve God and Mammon.

And thus we find, once more, a physical verification and explanation of that metaphysical law which Christ proclaimed as characteristic of the spiritual plane, 'The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light.' On the spiritual plane, as on the physical, we cannot have things both ways. On the one hand, 'the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.'<sup>1</sup> And, on the other hand, 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him.'<sup>2</sup>

And in this fact we discover the answer to the question of gain or loss formulated in the opening chapter of this volume,—'What have we to gain in this sorrowful world? What have we to lose in the measureless futurity?' The answer to this conundrum is—life. Each of us has a life to gain, and a life to lose. The primitive animal-organism, depicted in the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. 14.

twelfth chapter, in transferring its reliance from its physical to its intellectual resources, was forsaking one branch of vital activity in the search for another. It was losing its life and finding it. The man who, in obedience to the requirements of the Great Dilemma, deserts his reliance on his intellectual powers, and transfers it to his still higher spiritual faculties by electing to govern his life exclusively by self-effacing God-reliance, relinquishing his old policy of God-effacing self-reliance, is carrying the same process into the still higher plane of spiritual existence. He, too, is abandoning one order of vital activity in exchange for another. He, too, is losing his life and finding it. And in the very act of effecting this transference he is automatically solving the final problem of Religion, the fundamental paradox of Christianity :—‘He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.’



# THE CONFLICT OF TRUTH.

## SOME OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

'Mr. Capron is a very clever man, and a very skilful debater. He has written a great book on the Creation. He has met the men of science on their own ground, accepted their principles and adopted their very words, and he has proceeded to prove that the account of the Creation in Genesis is strictly and scientifically true. As an answer to Huxley or Haeckel it is perfect. We feel under the glamour of Mr. Capron's clever rhetoric all through.'—*Expository Times*.

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'Mr. Capron makes a shrewd thrust at the late Professor Huxley. Most people will credit him with a "very palpable hit." We welcome Mr. Capron's book as an ingenious and learned contribution to a question of the gravest importance, and it is written with admirable self-restraint and courtesy to dissentients. It deserves, and will reward, careful perusal by thoughtful men, whether theologians or workers in science.'—*Standard*.

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'A most ingenious, learned, and interesting book.'—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

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'Those who are at all interested in the problems which are involved in the apparent conflict between science and religion—"The Conflict of Truth" which Mr. Capron successfully reconciles—will find in this work a rare intellectual treat. It is difficult to decide which of the author's gifts to admire most, his masterly power of analysis, the logical arrangement of his ideas, or the cultured grace of his literary style.'—*Chamber of Commerce Journal*.

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## OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS—continued.

'Taken as a whole it must be admitted that the main contentions of this book have never before been urged in a manner so systematic and so complete. Mr. Capron's arguments are always suggestive. Throughout the volume he treats his subject from a scientific standpoint, and admirers of Mr. Herbert Spencer will be interested in the manner in which Mr. Capron contrives to press the *Synthetic Philosophy* into the service of his faith.'—*Literary Guide*.

'A curious and interesting attempt to show that the philosophy of Mr. Spencer is not merely in accord with the "religion of the Bible," but also is practically anticipated in it. His explanation of the Six Days of Creation is ingenious.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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'In this ample volume Mr. Capron writes most interestingly on the supposed conflict between science and religion. The analogies between gravitation, synchronism, the evolution of sight in animals and other natural phenomena, and the fundamental truths of religion, are developed with much vigour and ingenuity. Mr. Capron abounds in excellent ideas, and shows evidence of considerable scientific research. The book is well worth reading. The statement of the principles underlying the conflict between science and religion is excellent, and throughout the work are scattered luminous ideas well worth the attention of students of all schools.'—*Christian World*.

'The line of argument which Mr. Capron pursues is both novel and striking. The book is most suggestive, forming a remarkable contribution to the discussion of the questions at issue. An entirely original explanation of the contents of the Creation narrative in Genesis is placed before the reader. We strongly recommend any who are interested in the subject to study for themselves what Mr. Capron has to say about it. As to the originality and interest of his book there can be no question.'—*Church Family Newspaper*.

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## OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS—*continued.*

many, and be highly regarded, not only on account of the case which it sets up, but because of the lofty spirit in which Mr. Capron has carried out his task.'—*Leicester Chronicle*.

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## SOME OPINIONS OF THE AMERICAN PRESS.

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